

THE
**SOCIALIST
STANDARD**

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THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 593 Vol. 50 Jan., 1954

TOO LITTLE AND
TOO MUCH

SOCIALISM AND SHARING
OUT

THE PASSING SHOW

OUR ATTITUDE TO
ELECTIONS

THE BENEFITS OF PUBLIC
OWNERSHIP

Reflections on The Railway Dispute

THE MOST OBVIOUS comment on the railway dispute that threatened to bring transport to a standstill at the end of 1953 is that after the unions had rejected a 4s. arbitration award the threat of strike action induced the Transport Commission to step up the amount to 7s. or more though only the 4s. was paid immediately. Other workers have observed this and are drawing their own conclusions. It was a useful reminder to the trade unions that the strike weapon is still the only one the workers have on the industrial field.

But useful though that reminder is, it would be even more useful to the workers to notice and profit by other lessons that the dispute can teach.

Here is an industry that has been nationalised for six years, four of which were under the Labour Government. Nationalisation was preached to railwaymen and other workers as a remedy for the low wages and harsh

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Public Debate

HAS THE LABOUR PARTY A SOCIALIST POLICY

Arthur Skeffington, Labour M.P. for Hayes and Harlington.

opposed by

C. May, Socialist Party of Great Britain

Friday, January 22nd, 1954

Mellow Lane School, Uxbridge Road, Hayes, Middlesex

at 8 o'clock

Admission Free

All Welcome

treatment they had had to endure under private companies and they were led to believe that with nationalisation their troubles would be over. The fact that railwaymen were forced to threaten to disrupt Christmas traffic as their only way to get some measure of adjustment of wages to the higher cost of living should be a sufficient proof that nationalisation is no remedy.

To this the Labour Party makes the flimsy answer that the railwaymen's troubles only began when a Tory Government came into power in October, 1951, and allowed the cost of living to rise while urging wage restraint. This, however, is untrue at all points. If the cost of living has risen under the Tories so it did under the Labour Government and to a much larger extent; and the policy called "wage restraint" was initiated by the Labour Government in the same year that the railways were nationalised and remained their policy until they left office, despite the steady rise of prices. Those who care to remember what was then happening will recall that the railwaymen's

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demands for wage increases and their growing discontent with nationalisation were well in evidence long before the Tories came to power.

As it happens this received specific confirmation in the Labour *Daily Herald* of 14th December, 1953, in an article by the Industrial Editor, who wrote:

"Nobody wants a strike, but the railwaymen are right. The whole question of wage rates in essential national services had to be brought to a head some time. IT HAS BEEN EVADED AND POSTPONED FOR FIVE YEARS." (Emphasis his.)

Railway nationalisation was no more of a success from the workers' standpoint under Labour Government than it has been since.

But having admitted the cardinal point the *Herald's* Industrial Editor still wanted to lay the blame on the Tories and did so by using an argument that, though he fails to realise it, betrays again the essentially capitalist nature of Labour Party policy. He argues that the only way to render the railways capable of making a profit was to integrate them with road transport and this the Tories refused to continue. Instead, what they did, says the *Herald*, was to "give the profitable road haulage system back to private owners to milk." Along with this he implies that the wage demands of the railwaymen could not be met because the railways alone could not make a profit. In other words nationalisation

or State capitalism, whether under a Labour Government or a Tory Government, is still just as much a system run on profit as is private industry. And in spite of his attempted argument against the Tories he quite fails to explain why the Labour Government did not meet the reasonable demands of the railwaymen while the rail and road transport systems were being integrated under the Labour Government's transport nationalisation Act in the years 1948 to 1951.

Actually the *Herald's* Industrial Editor lets himself into a further dilemma. He roundly condemns the arbitration tribunal for awarding only 4s. and says:—

"There has been nothing quite so insensitive since the Treasury's classic offer of a farthing an hour to the cleaners."

But what he does not add is that the "classic offer" of a farthing an hour to government cleaners happened in 1949. It was under Labour Government while the late Sir Stafford Cripps was Chancellor of the Exchequer and head of the Treasury!

Labour and Tory can carry on their sham fight about the respective merits of private and State capitalism but from the workers point of view neither has any merit at all. Both callously put profit first because that is the necessary result of capitalism no matter what Government administers it.

SOCIALISM AND SHARING OUT

We have received from Lord Amwell (formerly Mr. Frederick Montagu, Labour M.P. for West Islington) a letter criticising statements in our December issue:—

Dear Sir,

It is a long time since I last wrote to the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* but I remember with pleasure the courtesy you extended to me as "a critic with some sympathy." Perhaps you will be able to find room for a line or two on "D.M.'s" article this month, "Capitalism and the Old Codgers."

Frankly, I am unable to understand how it is that "scientific" socialists still harbour the crude old tom-tiddler's-ground complex and appear to be so misled by the very money-bags (or bugs) illusion that money and wealth are one and the same thing so appealing to money reformers and tub wallopers. Do you really argue as socialists that capitalism's contradictions can be solved by "sharing out." If not, what is the point?

Of course dividends have gone up—by 20 per cent. against wage increases of 60 per cent. It is the natural result of inflation and in fact represents (on the surface of course) a relative decrease in exploitation. We know how illusory all this juggling with figures is, so why should we be guilty of it? Surely, the case for socialism is not that the plenty science has made possible is produced but undistributed but that it is not produced because it could not be sold if it were.

Two-thousand-six-hundred-millions gross profits last year paid one-thousand-one-hundred-millions to the treasury for a start. Add general taxation and five-hundred-and-fifty millions for depreciation, not to mention development, what would the spread-over be to the workers even if the whole of the residue were confiscated. It wouldn't run a modern war for a week! Yet it is still argued (by implication anyhow) that some major raid on the bosses' pockets will do the trick.

Social reformers and "do-good-to-the-poor" merchants jump to it. "It will pay you to vote Labour!" We ought to know by this time that the true measure of exploitation is what idlers consume against what workers consume. Despite spot-lighted extravagance, capitalism is not abundance economy and never will be. You seem to argue that what we want is not a state of welfare but a welfare state financed out of pickings. Compare the ultra-idealism in your other pages. It may not be what you mean, but that is how Tom, Dick, and Harry read it.

Again, are you not a bit illogical in making so much fuss about wages? You admit that social reforms keep pace with the technical march of capitalism. Don't wages, and for the same reason? Why pretend in this day and generation that wage increases come out of "business," big or little? For the pets of manual labour where high wage-pokes mean anything at all the benefit comes out of the rest of the working class. In the end even these go down the shoot. As Keynes insisted, high wages and high profits go together until the next blow up. Why then let it be thought that relatively big money is good class war, which is what you do. Once there was a real struggle, but the bosses have learnt a better trick. Individual tug-of-war no doubt, but the system persists and gets the average rate of profit without which it would collapse, probably in favour of some dictatorship. You ought to know that socialism cannot be got out of capitalism. Certainly not by "sharing out" the money that wouldn't be there to share out if capitalism failed. You've said a lot about "confusionism"—don't! And please don't throw chunks of Marx at me. Modern high-powered industrialism isn't the 1840's.

Yours etc.,

AMWELL.

REPLY

It will be noticed that Lord Amwell's criticism is not that the article contains statements explicitly supporting "sharing out," or the idea that capitalism produces plenty, but that it seems to imply these notions. Let us then first get rid of any possible misunderstanding in the minds of any other readers. Socialism is not a scheme for keeping capitalism but sharing out profits, or some of them, among the workers, and it is as true now as it was when Marx pointed it out three quarters of a century ago, that capitalism does not produce enough for the needs of the human race.

What the writer of the article was doing was to dispose of some untenable views about capitalists put forward in the *Daily Mirror*. He was not implying the things suggested by Lord Amwell and did not expect that anyone reading his article could reasonably think that he was implying them.

Two points made by Lord Amwell call for comment. He writes that the "true measure of exploitation is what the idlers consume against what workers consume." There are several objections to this, one of them being that it does not bring out the case against the capitalist social system. The wealth producers are not only producing necessities and luxuries for workers and capitalists to consume but are also working to maintain the bureaucratic apparatus of the capitalist state and the armaments and destruction inseparable

from capitalism's international rivalries and wars.

Lord Amwell also thinks that we should not make "so much fuss about wages."

We certainly do not accept Lord Amwell's view that the wage increase of one group of workers is obtained at the expense of other workers and he fails to explain how he thinks this happens.

To this we would reply that no matter what Government is running capitalism the workers should go on making a fuss about wages in the sense of struggling to raise and maintain them. If they don't they will be worse off. It was the Labour Government of which Lord Amwell was a supporter that framed the policy of "wage restraint," while the cost of living was rising.

In conclusion we would note that in recent years Lord Amwell has persistently levelled his criticisms against the whole conception of "Welfare Capitalism" held by the Labour Party, but his criticisms of that Party seem invariably to be ignored. This is discreet on their part since it is capitalism they stand for. But as the S.P.G.B. never swallowed any of those capitalist nostrums and has always stood for Socialism we can and do reject the criticisms. We are indeed surprised that Lord Amwell should have expected otherwise—or did he?

ED. COMM.

THE PASSING SHOW

Kenya: Who is to blame?

The reports from Kenya become more and more revealing. Brian Hayward, sentenced to three months' imprisonment for hanging up by their thumbs Mau Mau suspects (that is, men with nothing whatever proved against them), and burning their ear-drums with cigarette ends, is told by the judge that the court sympathises with him, is informed by the Government of Kenya that his job is being kept for him, and spends part of his sentence living in a hotel, working for a surveyor. The trial of Captain Griffiths reveals practices, such as the award of five shillings per head for every African killed in the "forbidden areas," which rouse even the pro-Government newspapers to protest. If such men had been Germans (or Negroes) we should have had our Press and Parliamentary pundits telling us that these incidents showed that the Germans (or Negroes) were still innately barbarous, uncivilised, and unfit for self-government. Even though they are British, many public figures have protested against the cruelty which has been revealed in recent trials; the Government has appointed a committee of inquiry. But the impression one is left with is that it is really all the fault of the few individuals concerned.

Passing the buck

But this impression is false. In order to preserve British rule in Kenya, Mau Mau has got to be stamped out; and in order to stamp out Mau Mau, thousands of Africans have got to be rounded up for questioning,

so that those who have displayed their hostility to the British immigration by attacking the lives and property of the settlers can be jailed or hanged. In an operation of this kind, the final appeal to force will often have to be made. Now in spite of the atmosphere of violence and sudden death which surrounds us from our birth—in the newspaper reports of wars and crime, in the cinema, on the radio and T.V.—it is still difficult to get human beings sufficiently hostile to other human beings to be prepared to kill them. So wars must be accompanied by propaganda. We have seen in the Press how Mau Mau has been depicted as something with no justification or excuse whatever, as being indeed so horrible and bestial that it must be stopped immediately at whatever cost. It is with this propaganda, reinforced no doubt by pep-talks from officers and N.C.O.'s, still ringing in their ears, that British soldiers go to war in Kenya. So who can be surprised if some of them carry on the killing and the questioning a little too savagely? The problems of society, in Britain or in Kenya, will never be solved by putting individual Africans or Britons on trial for individual offences. It is time we put the capitalist system in the dock.

On the Spot

It is worth reading the Parliamentary debates on Kenya, if only to see how much life there still seems to be in the old argument about being "on the spot." To criticism about the conduct of affairs in Africa, in Parliament and outside it, the supporters of the Govern-

ment often say "Ah! But you weren't there! The settlers in Kenya support our action, and they are on the spot." To begin with, the majority of the inhabitants of the disturbed areas of Kenya, those who are in fact on the spot, are obviously actively or passively in favour of Mau Mau, otherwise the disturbances would have been ended long ago; and to go on with, if this argument is a valid one for Kenya, why isn't it valid for Russia? I have yet to hear of Churchill saying "Russian Communism is a good thing, because the Russians are on the spot, and they support it." For just as the British workers (wrongly) support the British capitalist system, so do the Russian workers, so far, support the Russian capitalist system—just as wrongly. Unless those who use the "on the spot" argument are prepared to admit its validity everywhere, they should, in honesty, drop it.

Warring Tribes

Another phrase which comes up regularly in discussions about Africa and other under-developed areas of the world is "warring tribes." If any suggestion is made that the brown or black races of the world are just as fit for Socialism as are the white races, up spring, like a jack-in-the-box, the "warring tribes." "It isn't so long," the claim is made, "that this or that territory was given over to warring tribes." In *The Times* of December 17th, a correspondent in the Fiji Islands remarks that "the days of the warring tribes are not so far distant." No claim is ever made that the days of "warring nations" are over; only the days of "warring tribes," as if the fact that it was tribes who were going to war made war somehow more terrible. It is strange that the supporters of the British ruling class consider it creditable that that class has ended tribal warfare, when at the same time the colonies concerned have been dragged into the arena of world warfare, involving tanks, flame-throwers, block-busters, atom bombs, and so on. There are many senses in which the atom bomb is not an advance on the bow and arrow. So when you hear anyone talking about "warring tribes," be suspicious; he is probably using it as a substitute for thought.

Man-made

The belief that man is not entirely master of his destiny, and that there are non-human forces operating in our society to which can be ascribed great catastrophes like wars and depressions, has, it seems, not yet entirely died out. Mr. Adlai Stevenson, speaking at a Democratic Party dinner recently, made this remarkable statement: "If we have a depression in this country," he said, "it will be man-made." (*The Times*, 14-12-53.) Of course it will! Depressions are not natural phenomena like earthquakes; there were no depressions before there was a capitalist system of society.

Man created capitalist society; man could end it tomorrow if he wanted to. So naturally depressions are "man-made."

Surplus Food

During and after the second world war we were assured that never again would there be such a thing

as "surplus food"; the world was short of food, and it would need all our efforts to produce enough to feed all the people in it. This argument ignored the basic fact of capitalism; that it is built upon commodity production. Food is not produced so that people may eat; food is produced so that it may be sold and produce a profit for the seller. For some time the United States has averted the approach of the inevitable by making large foreign grants, with which other countries could buy U.S. products, including food. But no country under capitalism can adopt that as a permanent solution. So now the food piles up in the storehouses of the U.S. Government, which has to buy it from farmers in order to woo the farming vote. But what can be done with unsellable food? Some is sold back to the farmers, more cheaply than it was bought, as pig-food. For the rest the desperate search for overseas markets (not for people overseas who are hungry) goes on; the Secretary for Agriculture has just given his foreign agriculture service another quarter of a million dollars to help in the hunt (*The Times*, 21-11-53). If the food were given away, it would cut exports still further; who would buy food when he could get it free? So the vain quest continues for a solution to a problem that is in a capitalist society, insoluble.

Not particularly rewarding

The railwaymen and engineers, as they press for a few more shillings a week, may be interested to know of the opinions of *The Times* Paris Correspondent on what is a living wage these days. The job of being French President, he writes, "is not particularly rewarding materially. M. Auriol has been receiving total emoluments to the value of 45m. francs (£45,000), of which 26m. go on the expenses of living at the Elysee Palace and at Rambouillet (the French Windsor) and on special allowances for the civil and military staff. Fifteen million francs go on frais de representation, such as travelling expenses and charities, and only 4m. on personal remuneration. Of this, the President pays away about a quarter in tax. (12-12-53)."

Thus we find that the French President, after paying for all travelling expenses and board and lodging (if we might apply so mundane a term to the super-luxurious accommodation offered by the two presidential palaces), and after paying tax, has about £60 a week with which to pay for his cigarettes.

Now *The Times* is read by many members of the British ruling class. It is this class which tells us so frequently that the rich no longer exist. So one might have expected a flood of letters to appear in *The Times* criticising the Paris Correspondent's estimate of what is not particularly rewarding materially. To members of the working class, the President's job appears to be extremely well rewarded materially. But not, apparently, to our rulers. Can it be that there are two standards of rewards, one for the rulers and one for the ruled? The rich have gone, so we are told, but in their place seems to stand a class of people who are not particularly well rewarded materially. And the same kind of income appears to entitle one to a place in either category.

JOSHUA.

OUR ATTITUDE TO ELECTIONS

Vote for a Cause not a Face

In our recent by-election campaign in North Paddington we laid stress on the fact that we attached no special significance to our choice of a candidate. We made it quite clear that we approached the electorate with an object in view—that of Socialism, which implies the complete dispossession of the entire capitalist class and the reorganisation of society on the basis of production solely for use.

We hold that when a majority understand the nature of Capitalism, understand the futility of electing leaders to reform it, and that a complete change of the basis of society is both necessary and possible, then they will democratically elect their representatives for this sole object.

If we take a look at elections today, we find that the candidates of other political parties pander to a variety of tastes and requirements, and play off one group of people against another. "Something for everybody" might well be their motto. It is an encouraging sign that our political opponents are recognising the fundamental difference between us and other parties, though their statement of the position is usually not quite as we would put it. Thus *The Glasgow Herald* (19.11.53) wrote that:

"... they need not undertake all the degrading business of making him (the candidate) known to North Paddingtonians, cataloguing his virtues, giving him opportunities to kiss babies. Individuals count for nothing with the S.P.G.B., who acknowledge no leaders, have never swerved from the principles laid down in 1904, and proudly remain the only political party who implore the electors not to vote for them unless in full understanding and agreement with what they stand for."

Since the majority of workers think along capitalist lines, it is quite simple for the Tory, Liberal, Labour, Communist and other candidates to come along with plenty of promises—promises that they can in no way fulfil. Knowing how workers identify themselves with "our country," "our exports (or imports)," these parties can always hold out the threat of "our interests" being at stake—when all that is meant is that capitalist interests are at stake.

"Working men have no country" is as true a statement today as when Marx first said it. When the worker realises that he possesses nothing but his ability to work, which he sells to the capitalist to enable himself to live, then he will have different ideas about voting for someone to represent him. He will only elect a delegate to carry out his wishes and who would be powerless to do otherwise. Be that candidate painter or plumber, clerk or bus driver, typist or cook—it will not matter. That he undertakes to carry out what he will be democratically elected for will be the only concern; not as now, when candidates parade their "good looks," "war records," "homely backgrounds," and all the other dope that is used as what the Americans call "sucker bait."

We can understand how the press in general, seeking "news" in preference to stating facts, registers surprise at our reluctance to give a life-story of the candidate. How gladly its reporters mop up any little tit-bit to make news; how they pester us all day long for photographs, age, profession or job, hobby and what not. As they and their employers all support the

retention of a capitalist system of society, it is too much to expect that they will give much prominence to stating the case of a party that seeks its complete abolition. Nevertheless, they do make small mentions, usually by means of "selective suppression"—that is, the selection from what we tell them of what they think they ought to print.

In such a way is the wider spread of our propaganda made difficult. Not having the vast resources of other parties for propaganda—giant press organisations, the B.B.C. with radio and television (both barred to us)—we have to depend on our monthly journal, occasional pamphlets, outdoor propaganda, and the voluntary help so tirelessly given by our members. Our funds are always inadequate for the amount of activity we would like to indulge in.

Sympathisers might take note of this and assist us financially and otherwise. There is always plenty to do for those anxious to help. You will be able to assist in a comradesly atmosphere, and will find pleasure in doing something worthwhile, instead of just giving a blank cheque at election times to the supporters of Capitalism.

You will find no "Great Men" in the S.P.G.B. The parts that its members play are varied, but no attempt is made to measure one against the other—the keynote is co-operative effort, as it will be in socialist society. One of our objections to the existence of "Very Important Persons" is that it presupposes that some persons are accounted of little importance. We are a band of ordinary folk, but each is as unimportant (and therefore each is as important) as the other, whether chosen for speaker, secretary, organiser or by-election candidate.

G. HILBINGER.

DENISON HOUSE

296 Vauxhall Bridge Road, Victoria, S.W.1.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 7th

7 p.m. prompt

1904 **50** 1954

YEARS OF SOCIALISM

Second meeting in series of four

"Socialist theory in the light of modern developments"

Speakers: H. READ & E. WILMOT

★

Third meeting on Sunday, March 7th

Speakers: R. COSIOR and H. YOUNG

ABOUT BOOKS

WHEN the followers of Mohammed went into battle they were imbued with the idea that the outcome of the fight was in the hands of their god, Allah. If Allah willed that a man should die, nothing he could do would prevent it. If Allah willed that he should live, then, no matter what dangers he faced, he was safe.

There have been historians who have adopted a similar approach to a study of human history. They have had different Allahs but they have attempted to show that historical events have been determined by some external factor. Geography and racial characteristics have been used to explain history. There are those who plump for the economic factor as the determining force and they will argue that the action of individuals has no more influence on the course of history than water has on a duck's back. If this were correct, the factors that determine historical events must, at the same time, pre-determine them.

At the opposite pole are those who see history as the result of the moulding influence of strong-willed individuals; great men, they hold, purely by their strength of character, have been able to direct the course of historical development.

Between those holding these extreme points of view, free-will and pre-determinism, are many others who have attempted to explain history by reference to "factors" and external laws. None of them are able to give us a satisfactory interpretation.

The "Materialist Conception of History" propounds the view that history is a process, subject to no laws or factors imposed from without. This does not mean that the process is disorderly or that history cannot be a science. To observe this order in history we must isolate one part of the historical process and, without ignoring the other parts, see how its influence has been decisive in determining the general trend. If we isolate the technological aspect of man's history we can see how he has progressively extended his control over nature by invention and the discovery of more efficient tools and processes. Furthermore, we shall see how this aspect has been the foundation of all other human activities, determining their condition and defining their limits.

Where does the individual fit into this scheme of things? How far can one man's actions influence

history? What happens if men struggle against the historical process? These and other aspects are dealt with in G. V. Plekhanov's essay, "The Role of the Individual in History," written at the close of the last century. It was directed against the opponents of Marxism in those days and mentions a number of historians and others of whom we have never previously heard. It is a brilliant essay. Published by Lawrence and Wishart, Ltd., at two shillings.

* * *

Science is ever opening up new branches of research. The development of that branch of biology known as genetics has been astounding but it is difficult for a lay-man to get to grips with such a subject when its exponents present from their vocabulary a string of words that sound double-Dutch to him. Text books on genetics abound with such words as synergrids, antipodal, zygote, gametogenesis, haploid prothallus, vacuolated, megaspore, oogenesis and many more like them.

One of the simplest books on the subject is, "What's All This About Genetics?" by Rona Hurst, published by Thrift Books at one shilling. We do not claim that this little book is free from words that will interrupt a reader's train of thought, but we can say that it is the most simple exposition of the subject that we have read to date.

The exponents or racialism have called scientists to their aid and have even called their race theories scientific. Genetics blows that claim to smithereens. The Department of Mass Communication of Unesco has now published one of its most useful books, "What is Race?" (5s.) This very simple book is based on works by geneticists, biologists, psychologists and experts on culture. It is packed with diagrams that a child can understand and no one could fail to glean from its early pages a clear knowledge of the underlying principles of present day genetics.

This is about the simplest written and best illustrated educational book that has come our way for a long while. It contains a wealth of ammunition for socialist propagandists.

(Members of the Party can obtain these books from the Book Dept. at Head Office.)

W. WATERS.

THE BENEFITS OF PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

"The main objectives of the Trade Union Movement include the maintenance and improvement of wages, working conditions and living standards, the assurance to workpeople of adequate opportunities for suitable employment and the implementation of their right to share in the control of industry. These objectives . . . can only be adequately fulfilled within a system of public control."—(General Council's Report to the 1944 T.U.C.)

Nationalisation, which the Labour Party and T.U.C. habitually refer to as "public ownership" is "only one form of public control" and is clearly thought to be in the interests of the working-class. It should be noted, in passing, that the Labour Party does not claim to be a class party; it claims to represent the

interests of all sections of the nation, and that nationalisation is, therefore, also in the interests of the capitalist class.

Given the existence and continuance of the capitalist system, the objectives stated by the 1944 T.U.C. are a fair statement of working-class interests and, in this light, it is worthwhile to examine the General Council's Interim Report on Public Ownership presented to and approved by the 85th Annual T.U.C. held in the Isle of Man in September. This Report summarises the purposes for which "public ownership" has been advocated, under five heads:—efficiency and development; redistribution of wealth;

increased public control over the economic system; better industrial relations; and the maintenance of full employment. The Report reviews the experience of nationalisation under the first four heads only; it does not deal with the fifth because the purpose of nationalisation to maintain full employment "has not yet been called into play at all under post-war economic conditions." That statement is perhaps a recognition by the T.U.C. that full employment prior to October, 1951, was not the result of the Labour Government's planning.

Redistribution of Wealth?

The advocates of nationalisation claim that "more money would be available for increasing wages and reducing prices" because as the elements of risk are removed from investment in State industries, the interest on stock and new capital will be less than on investment in private industry and, unlike the rate on private industry shares, the rate of interest payable on the stocks of nationalised industries would remain constant no matter how much efficiency increased and production rose.

With regard to the return to former shareholders the Report tells us that although interest on *compensation* stock, being fixed, has not risen with the general level of prices yet:—"On the whole, largely because of adherence to the principle of fair compensation, the reduction in interest payments to former shareholders has been small." (P. 14.) On the subject of raising new capital "more cheaply than private industry" because of Government guaranteed stock, the Report says ". . . the nationalised industries have raised many hundreds of millions of pounds by issuing stock to the public. The interest rates payable on successive issues of stock have, in general, risen in common with the rate of interest on Government and private stocks, but it has been apparent that the issue prices and yields of nationalisation stocks have been much closer to the price and yield of preference shares than to those of Ordinary Shares. *As in all other judgments of the achievements of the nationalised industries, it is impossible to compare what has happened in this field with what would have happened under private ownership.*" It is, however, reasonable to believe that, for example, private railway companies would not have been able to borrow £60 million on the open market at the gilt-edged rate of 4½ per cent. in November, 1952." (P. 15. Our italics.) Be sure of your share of surplus value! Invest—in Labour's Gilt-Edged Railway!

What, then, of the workers' wages? Since nationalisation the miners' earnings "have increased by half as much again proportionately as those of workers in manufacturing industry," but the increase in earnings of railway workers has been "only about three-fifths of the general average." In the gas and electricity industries the increases have been about equal to the general rise in average earnings. "To state these facts poses more questions than it answers; perhaps the most important conclusion to be drawn from them is that, as experience in the transport industry in particular has shown, nationalisation cannot open the door to unlimited wage improvements." (P. 15.)

Anybody who thinks that it was the fact of nationalisation itself which benefited the miners should

read para. 21 on Page 6 of the Report. The National Coal Board was faced with a drain on manpower and had to raise recruitment to a reasonable level. "To do this has involved a number of *urgent but expensive* measures. Miners' wages rose by about 70 per cent. per manshift worked from 1946, to May 1953, but the N.C.B. and the National Union of Mineworkers' have not yet been able to complete a rational wages structure for the industry. Welfare facilities have also been increased as a *second* method of making conditions more tolerable and attractive, and training and educational schemes are a *third* means used by the N.C.B. to improve their manpower situation." (Our italics.)

The Report states that the redistribution of income as a result of "public ownership" has been "insignificant in comparison with the effect, under the Coalition and Labour Governments, of taxation policy." And we know what that was worth! The Acts of the Labour Government nationalising certain industries were supposed to be in the interests of the English section of the working-class, and yet the delegates of several millions of those workers have had to endorse a Report saying that:—"What cannot be answered with any precision are the questions, first, how much less money is now being paid out in interest than would have been paid out if these industries had remained in private hands and, second, who has benefited from the savings." (P. 16.) Workers should also note that "the nationalised industries have been subject to the same economic pressures as the rest of industry."

The Benefits

A clue as to who has benefited from the savings of the nationalised industries is given when we read about the prices of their products. "The prices of transport, coal, gas and electricity have all risen less than the average since pre-war, and in many instances nationalised industries have deliberately deferred putting up prices and have on occasion accepted a deficit as a result. It is a common error that such deficits have been met by the Government out of taxation; this is not so."

The industries nationalised by the Labour Government were those whose products are used by all other industries. After two wars the British economy (capitalism) was in a bad way and much "planning" was required to put the country "on its feet" to be able to compete with old and up-and-coming nations. It was important that the costs of production of the manufacturing and exporting industries be kept as low as possible, and efficiency is an essential part of the case for nationalisation. Whatever it might have wished to do, the Labour Party during its six years of power served British Capitalism well. It is prepared to have another go. "British capitalism long ago entered its decline and, in order to balance accounts in peacetime and to pay the cost of two world wars, it has been increasingly forced to realise its foreign investments or to rely on loans and gifts. This cannot go on." ("Challenge to Britain," Labour Party, Page 2.)

Of course, the "principle of public ownership" isn't worth as many votes as it was in 1945. As Mr. Gooch on behalf of the Labour Party Executive said at Margate recently, "Why wreck your election prospects in advance by rash action at this Conference?"

D.S.C.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JANUARY,



1954

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

TOO LITTLE AND TOO MUCH

The Crazy Food Situation

AN argument used more and more frequently nowadays by opponents of Socialism is that while the case against capitalism may have been true long ago it is no longer true today because capitalists and governments have in the meantime acquired a social conscience and have removed the old evils.

A case in point is the way in which, during periodical trade depressions, merchants and politicians could be complaining that there was too much of everything in the market while if they had looked around they would have seen millions of people cold and hungry and in desperate need of the goods that the shopkeepers could not sell. Marx dealt in detail with this characteristic of capitalism and showed that too much in the market meant only too much to be sold at a profit; it did not mean too much or even enough for human need.

"It is not a fact that too many of the necessities of life are produced in proportion to the existing population. The reverse is true. Not enough is produced to satisfy the wants of the great mass decently and humanely."—(Capital, Vol. III., page 302.)

During the last ten years there has been much talk in international conferences, such as those of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of United Nations, about the impossibility of the situation arising again of people starving while unsold food was being piled up in warehouses. Governments have formally adopted policies of "full employment" and the large political parties in this country have agreed in demanding maximum production by the workers, assuring them that they could not produce too much.

Now let us turn to the food situation. The Food and Agriculture Organisation has campaigned for years to make governments and peoples aware of the state of world food supplies. First they pointed out that until last year world food production had not even kept up

with the growth of population and only did catch up in 1953. But catching up meant merely that it was no worse than it had been in 1939. There isn't enough produced even if it were evenly distributed and made freely accessible which it is not.

Professor de Castro at the F.A.O. conference in Rome on 23rd November, 1953, pointed out as other experts have done that "sixty out of every hundred human beings are going hungry." (*Daily Herald*, 24th November, 1953.)

If three out of every five people in the world have not enough to eat is it possible that there is food being piled up because it cannot be sold? Listen to the *Times* and *Financial Times* on the subject.

The *Times* in a leader on 14th December, was explaining why the present Government and Minister of Agriculture is in a different situation from that which faced the Labour Government six years ago:

"They cannot overlook that world supplies of food have in the interval become ample, that there are large and growing surpluses, and that world prices of most kinds of food have fallen sharply and are still falling."—(*Times*, 14/12/53.)

The *Financial Times* four days earlier published an article on "The World Wheat Surplus." Here is an extract:—

"For the present it would seem that there is an absolute world surplus of wheat—not one merely created by the dollar barrier."—(*Financial Times*, 9/12/53.)

The *Financial Times* writer went on to say that though the wheat situation is unhappy at present, supply and demand may be in balance again in three or four years time. And how will this balance be brought about? A main factor will be that the production of wheat is expected to fall in some of the chief producing countries. "In North America the recent high yields are not expected to continue and the U.S. is also planning to reduce acreage."

Doubtless the writers of these estimates of the food situation would, if asked, express sympathy with the needs of the world's poor; but, as exponents of capitalist doctrine, they could logically have added "but what have the undernourished millions to do with profit and capitalism?"

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE

Public Meeting

ST. ANDREWS HALLS (MID HALL)

Berkeley Street, Glasgow

SUNDAY, 17th January, 1954, at 7 p.m.

We have invited representatives of the Glasgow (Kelvingrove) Divisional Labour Party to take the platform to state their case in opposition to the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

Socialist Party Speaker - - T. A. MULHERON.

SHEFFIELD—Will members and sympathisers in this area who are interested in forming a local group, please contact Comrade G. H. Southey, 19 Byron Road, Sheffield, 2. Telephone, Sheffield 52358.

COERCIVE CAPITALISM

THOUGH lip service is paid to the role of reason in the conduct of human affairs under Capitalism, we are constantly reminded that the final arbiter today is the power of coercion—of violent compulsion and forcible restraint. After Kenya and Berlin come Libya and Trieste, and by the time this article is in print, an outbreak of violence in some other part of the world will probably have come into the news.

Compared with past eras, it may be said that the sort of violence that is rife in the world today is less personal. True, men still engage in hand-to-hand fighting, but they do so, not for individual advantage, but for a "cause." National armies are formed and trained to protect "national interests," i.e., capitalist class interests of nations and groups of nations. Of course, modern war is not often admitted to be fought over such base economic issues as markets, trade routes and spheres of influence. It is extremely doubtful whether millions would be prepared to fight and die to settle the issue of whether one group of capitalists were to have control of an area, or another. In order to gain mass support for the prosecution of the struggle it has, therefore, to be elevated to the level of a crusade—it becomes a battle for a "way of life." And always this way of life is something different from the means that are to be used to achieve it. War and coercion are supposed to be instruments for the achievement of certain ends that are non-war and non-coercive, such as peace and the conduct of human affairs on a reasonable basis.

Looking at the matter from a personal point of view, hardly any individual justifies his use of coercive methods on the grounds that those methods are desirable and preferable to others. Excluding the small minority of psychopathic cases (largely the product of a violent environment) most people are undoubtedly genuinely sorry when they take part in acts of coercion of one sort or another. "I'm a peaceful chap at heart, but . . ." and what follows usually boils down to arguing that in order to get peace one has first to fight, or that in order to get people to be reasonable one has first to demonstrate one's forcible superiority.

In the hands of politicians, these arguments assume greater subtlety. Thus Sir Winston Churchill, in justifying the manufacture of atomic weapons, was reported to say that "it may be that with the advance of destructive weapons which enable everyone to kill everyone else no one will want to kill anyone at all" (*Daily Mail*, 4.11.53). Simpler souls will ask, what's wrong with not wanting to kill anyone at all *without* having the advance of destructive weapons? Nevertheless, the Churchillian point of view requires to be answered, since it is substantially the same as those of all who are not socialists.

Where, then, does the socialist stand in relation to this question of coercion as a means to a non-coercive end? He asserts that, so long as the majority of people support and justify Capitalism, it will continue to exhibit its coercive nature in present reality, despite all their good intentions regarding future possibilities. If mankind is to achieve peace, and a state of affairs in

which the power of reason, and not force, is decisive, then the ideas of people must be in line with such a state of affairs *now*. To defer taking up such an attitude is to allow present conditions to continue. "We shall abandon force tomorrow, but today we have to meet the force of our enemies with greater force"—but tomorrow never comes.

However, socialists are not alone in realising that the means one adopts determine the character of the end one achieves. There are so many examples of this in history that one would have thought that mankind would have learned by now that peace cannot be obtained by preparation for war, nor social harmony by the fostering of group prejudices, nor co-operation by coercion—in short, that *x* cannot be obtained by using means which are anti-*x*.

A glimmer of this truth occasionally illumines the thinking of even those who are very far from accepting socialist ideas. Thus, in America the Presbyterian Church has condemned "the tendency to combat Communism with a subtle but potent assault upon basic human rights." Its statement was called by the New York reporter of the *Daily Mail* "the bluntest answer so far to what is known as McCarthyism" (4.11.53). The General Council of the Presbyterian Church emphasises "grave" concern on these points:—

1. The tendency of some special enquiries to become "inquisitions" in which treason and dissent become confused.

2. An inclination to condemn men and women publicly upon the uncorroborated word of former Communists.

3. A "subtle and silent" dethronement of truth by prominent public figures.

4. The danger that democracy might succumb to the Communist philosophy of lying, through fear and in the name of expediency.

The Presbyterian Church deplores the fact that "the Communist menace is being dealt with increasingly as a police problem rather than as a secular religious faith of great vitality." What it is really saying is that it wants to win converts; by treating the matter as a religious one, it is always possible that people can change their religion. But, more important, it also sees that to combat inquisitions with "special enquiries," and lying with "dethronement of truth" is likely to lead to confusion—and it recommends its religious alternative. With its alternative we are not particularly concerned in this article, except to point out that religious struggles are by no means free from the coercive methods of inquisitions and lying. Our main concern is to draw certain inferences from this statement of the Presbyterian Church:—

1. The so-called ideological struggle going on within Capitalism today is a struggle between two or more sides who are using the same methods and who are prepared to use the same methods. Their "ideologies" are fundamentally the same, and are in line with the aggrandisement of a particular group of capitalists.

2. The struggle is caused, not because each side is

different from the other, but because they are rivals to achieve the same economic ends.

Socialists are people who understand the struggle and its cause to be as above. Recognising that they

have nothing to gain from it, they take no part in it, renounce its methods and, refusing to be diverted by fear of what the "other side" will do, aim solely at introducing Socialism. S.R.P.

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY—4

Civil War in Austria

BEHIND the closed doors of the Hotel Schiff in Linz a group of workers stood holding rifles and light machine guns. Earlier that day they had listened to the measured tread of the armed levies of the fascist Heimwehr marching through the town on their way to the offices of the Landeshauptmann (Prefect) of the Province to demand that all members of the Austrian Social Democratic Party be removed from political office. At the same time the federal police were going from house to house in the working class districts, confiscating any arms they found in the workers' possession.

In the turmoil of the struggle between Republicans and Monarchists at the end of the 1914-1918 war many workers and peasants who had joined in that struggle, had kept the arms issued to them during the war. In the country districts of Carinthia and Styria the peasants had organised in the Heimwehr for defence against the Yugo-Slavs and the possible spread of Bolshevism. In the towns the workers joined the Republikanische Schutzbund to defend and maintain the new republic.

During the years following the 1914-1918 war there were a number of minor armed clashes between the Heimwehr and the Schutzbund with killings on both sides. When legal action was taken after these clashes it was invariably to the detriment of the workers.

The governments of Italy and Germany were striving against one another for a dominating influence over Austrian politics and Austria became the battleground on which these two powers fought out their commercial antagonisms. The Austrian Social Democratic Party had for years favoured association with Germany, whilst a small Austrian Nazi party stood for a complete union between the two countries. The Heimwehr was supported by Italy.

In 1934 the government of Austria was a coalition between the Catholic Christian Social Party and the Heimwehr with a few smaller parties attached. During the previous few years the Christian Social Party had been getting steadily weaker, losing many members to the Heimwehr, so that, by the beginning of 1934 the Christian Social chancellor, Dr. Dollfuss, was desperately seeking support from other parties. He could have the support of the militarised Fascist Heimwehr or of the largest single political party in Austria, the Social Democratic Party. He chose the former, knowing that that party aimed at the complete suppression of the Social Democrats and the trade unions.

Otto Bauer, leader of the Social Democratic Party, Julius Deutsch, leader of the Schutzbund, Karl Seitz, Mayor of Vienna, and other Social Democrat leaders were prepared to make all manner of sacrifices, short of their own suppression, to stave off the clash that was ahead. They also prepared for the clash by arranging for a general strike to take place in the event of any of the following four contingencies.

1. If the Government, in defiance of the law and

Constitution, introduced a Fascist Constitution.

2. If the Government illegally and unconstitutionally deposed the municipal and Provincial authorities of Red Vienna and handed over the administration of Vienna to a Government Commissioner.

3. If the Government dissolved the Party.

4. If the Trade Unions were dissolved or "brought into line." (Resolution of the October 1933 Conference of the Austrian Social Democratic Party, quoted by Otto Bauer in "Austrian Democracy Under Fire.")

The Heimwehr, lead by the vice-chancellor, Major Fey and by Prince Starhemberg, urged on by Mussolini in Italy, was demanding that the municipal councils controlled by Social Democrats should be "cleaned up," that Italian should be taught in schools instead of French and that the trade unions should be curbed. The Social Democrats asked Dollfuss to reject these demands and they would be willing to accept "his policy, however bad this might seem to them." (Quoted by Alexander Schonau in "Civil War in Austria.")

The Social Democratic leaders were still vacillating when the blow struck.

When the police forced their way into the Hotel Schiff, which was the headquarters of the labour organisations in Linz, the workers inside opened fire with their rifles. They felt that the decisive moment had come. Whilst the armed Heimwehr fascists were free to force their will at the point of a gun, the government authorities were disarming the workers to prevent them from offering resistance. It was a spontaneous decision to die fighting rather than surrender without striking a blow.

The news of the fighting at the Hotel Schiff spread like wildfire through Linz. Troops were called in. Street fighting began. The members of the Schutzbund brought out the weapons that they had managed to conceal from the police and the battle spread all over the town.

The news spread to other industrial towns and fighting started in Steyr, Bruck-on-Mur, Eggenburg, Graz, Kapfenburg, Judenburg, Wilhelmsburg, Worgl, Haring, the Traisental and in the capital, Vienna. The incident in Linz happened on the morning of Monday, February 12th, 1934, the first shots were fired in Vienna at 5 p.m. the same day.

"The fighting began. On the one side members of the working class, many of them unemployed, armed with an old war-time rifle and a few clips of cartridges. On the other side troops and police, with full modern equipment—armoured cars, artillery and howitzers, mine-throwers."—"Austrian Democracy Under Fire," Otto Bauer.)

The general strike did not materialise. Electricity, gas, newspaper, tram and some factory workers came out spontaneously, but the strong railway union, which had been brought to heel some time previously, did not respond. The indecisive policy of the Social Democrats had lost them the confidence of large sections of the working class.

In Vienna the troops isolated different groups of workers and drove them into the residential districts. The government maintained control of the broadcasting stations, the telephones and other means of communication so that each group of workers had no means of knowing what was happening outside its own immediate district. The Schutzbund leaders were arrested at the outset and lying propaganda was broadcast.

Despite all the disadvantages the workers fought on for four days. But,

"The artillery, the heavy howitzers, won the day. . . . Hundreds of workers, women and children have been slaughtered. Thousands of wounded people are writhing in pain. Thousands are lying herded together in the prisons. In blood and slaughter has the new Austria, 'Christian, German and corporative,' been founded."—"Austrian Democracy Under Fire."

Otto Bauer and Julius Deutsch, despite radio reports that they had fled the country, remained in Vienna till all hope was lost, then, with a group of workers, they fought a rearguard action all the way to the Czechoslovak frontier and crossed over fully armed.

Bauer states,

"The Hungarian Social-Democrats in 1919, and the Italians down to 1922, pursued a 'Left' revolutionary policy, closely akin to Communism—and in both countries their policy ended disastrously. Conversely, the German Social-Democrats adopted a very 'statesmanlike' nationalist, 'right' line of policy—and they, too, have been laid low. We in Austria tried to tread a path midway between the Italo-Hungarian and German extremes—and we, too, have been defeated. The causes of the defeat of the working class clearly lie deeper than in the tactics of its parties or than in this or that tactical mistake."—"Austrian Democracy Under Fire."

How right he is. The Austrian Social Democrats,

like similar "labour" parties all over the world, aimed to reform capitalism and tried to make it operate to the benefit of the working class. An impossibility. The discontent bred of the capitalist system drives the workers to support one reformist party after another, hoping to find relief from their oppression.

Housing and welfare schemes seem attractive but they do not remove the workers' poverty and insecurity. When the workers find that a party that they have put into power does not produce "the goods," they turn from it to another reform-promising party, then to another and another and, maybe, when their memories dim, back to the first one again.

Any political party, without control of the armed forces of the state, is at the mercy of those who do control the state forces, unless these forces rebel and pass over to the support of the party. Only a socialist understanding—a clear recognition of their class status—by a majority of the workers can be a guarantee of their continued, unwavering support for their political party. With such a majority, the control of the state forces can be achieved and then capitalism will not be reformed, but abolished.

Books to read:

"Austrian Democracy Under Fire," by Otto Bauer. "Civil War in Austria. A Reply to Otto Bauer," by Alexander Schonau.

"The Tragedy of Austria," by Julius Braunthal. "Austrian Workers' Tragic Heroism." SOCIALIST STANDARD, March, 1934.

W. WATERS.

The North Paddington By-Election

The Campaign through Press Cuttings

OCTOBER

THE Party's first mention was in the evening papers of the 14th, when our decision to contest the seat was announced. A week later Comrade Waters was chosen to be candidate, and this was accurately reported in most of the daily papers, except the *News Chronicle* (31st) which referred to an "unofficial Socialist." A letter was sent (but not, to our knowledge, printed) pointing out that Waters was the OFFICIAL candidate of the S.P.G.B.

The local papers naturally treat local news at greater length than the national dailies, and the first comment was in an editorial in the *Kilburn Times* (23rd):

"Once again North Paddington folk will have the rare opportunity of voting for a candidate of the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Whoever he may be, he can be written off as a possible M.P. at once. . . ."

However the *Kilburn Times* did give something of our side of the story the following week:

"Says a statement issued by the S.P.G.B., 'The choice of candidate is of hardly any importance. The ideas that we wish to put forward to the electorate is the main purpose.'"

"Their 'ideas' include 'a system of society based upon the common ownership of the means and instruments for producing wealth by and in the interests of the whole community.'"

NOVEMBER

Comrade Harry Wilson got a 200-word letter

printed in the *Recorder* (2nd). He corrected a correspondent's claim and *Recorder* heading that the S.P.G.B.'s entry constituted a "split" in the Labour Movement. The *Manchester Guardian* (19th) quoted from the "sturdy and uncompromising" statement (our first notice to the press) of "the faithful band":

"The S.P.G.B. is opposed to the policies of all other political parties, on the grounds that they all support the retention of capitalism in one form or another. The candidate is Mr. W. Waters. The fact that no description of the candidate is given beyond his name is due to the way in which the party approaches electoral activity. It is the policy of the S.P.G.B. that is placed before the electors. . . . The S.P.G.B. is the only political party which asks the electors not to vote for it unless they agree with what it stands for."

Our candidate's nomination (23rd) was widely reported, but mostly with little comment. The *Evening News* (24th) reported that Waters had told the voters: "I am not begging for your vote," but the *Times* seemed rather bad-tempered—"neither the hope of doing good for himself nor the power of doing harm to his opponents."

The *Daily Mail* (24th) decided to have a bit of fun. Under the heading "Sir Galahad joins in a political joust" it referred to Waters "stepping down from his red London bus to ride a dialectical white horse." But the report wasn't too bad, and did put one or two points of our case. And the next day the *Mail* had another word for us in a feature article:

"... he is even more removed from the traditions of Eatanswill than most candidates, for he says: 'I make you no promises, I am not begging for your vote. My party does not aim to govern you.'"

The *Daily Telegraph* (25th) quoted from our second press notice—"he is not asking for votes, but to 'change people's ideas'." On the 27th the plot thickened (in the *Daily Herald*, anyway): "A MYSTERY OF THE BY-ELECTION is—what goes on behind the billposted windows of No. 63, Elgin-avenue?" The *Herald* partly redeemed itself by reporting that "Mr. Waters assures the electors that his Party does not aim to govern them, that he is making no promise and not begging for votes."

Meanwhile, the local press was publishing letters from Comrade Hilbinger (*St. Marylebone and Paddington Record* and *Paddington Mercury* 26th), and the *Kilburn Times* had a cartoon depicting a hooded figure (no photograph) "in the sidings—Mr. Bill Waters of the S.P.G.B."

In the provinces, the *Glasgow Herald* (25th) was suggesting that "if Labour be regarded as Left, the S.P.G.B. stand left of Left," and the *Liverpool Daily Post* (27th)—"Two Goliaths and a David"—quoted the David (Waters): "We shall indulge in no ballyhoo, boasting or electioneering stunts. We appeal to your understanding and intelligence—not to your emotions and prejudices."

Then we came to the high spot of the campaign—the Metropolitan Theatre Meeting (29th). Two good reports (comparatively good, at any rate) were in the *Daily Express* and *Daily Telegraph*. The former reported that this was by far the biggest meeting of the election up till that time, and in fact only Aneurin Bevan's later meeting at the Porchester Hall was to rival it. But the *Express* should note that Mr. A. Turner is a member, not a mysterious "supporter" of the S.P.G.B. The latter—headed "Meeting Was Not To Get Votes"—quoted Waters that the meeting was "really to put over our case not so much to get votes in this election."

The interest shown by a *News Chronicle* reporter in our campaign bore very poor fruit: "I watched two red-headed canvassers of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, whose candidate is Mr. W. E. Waters. They called on Mrs. Dolly Nally..." and the red-nosed reporter's name was Silly Billy.

DECEMBER

The *Star* (1st) d'd rather better by quoting our chief of staff (?): "We explain Socialism to people. We do not go around asking people to vote... It is our normal propaganda." The *Daily Worker*, conveniently overlooking the Met. meeting, jibed "nobody

SOCIALISM OR CAPITALISM

(We reproduce below the Address issued during the by-election at North Paddington.)

25th November, 1953.

FELLOW WORKERS,

I make you no promises.

I am not begging for your vote.

My Party does not aim to govern you.

These statements may seem astounding, especially coming at election time. Nevertheless, they are true.

They should serve to show you the unbridgeable

gulf between the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the more popular political parties opposed to it in this election. It is the common stock-in-trade of our opponents, when striving to win your support, to promise you a collection of quack cures for the problems that are uppermost in your minds. At their annual conferences they concoct programmes that are to serve as bait at future elections. It is the same old bait re-hashed at every election. You have had enough elections in North Paddington during the past few years to know that this is true.

On the day of the poll (3rd) the *Daily Express* reminded readers that "his party doesn't want votes because it doesn't believe in governments of any type." The next day it published its post-mortem on the result, and made the entirely unwarranted assumption that had Waters not stood "his votes would have gone to the Socialist" (meaning the Labour candidate). Only two other papers took the line that the S.P.G.B. was splitting the Labour vote. For the rest, it appears that they now recognise that the S.P.G.B. is a different proposition altogether from the other parties.

The *St. Marylebone and Paddington Record* and *Hampstead News* (3rd) printed a 200-word statement by Waters, and the following comment:

"Waters is the only one of the three who is really happy today. He and his supporters are certain to lose their deposit and know it. They think that a cheap price to pay for the publicity their intervention has brought their policy."

The best local report of the Met. meeting was in the *Paddington Mercury* (4th):

"Mr. Waters said: 'When a Socialist looks at a fellow man or woman he is totally colour blind. These problems will only be ended when the private property basis of society is abolished.'"

"Mr. A. Turner, speaking in support of Mr. Waters, outlined the future Socialist society and portrayed a world in which work, sex and recreation were freed from the restrictive influences of present-day capitalist society."

The *Socialist Leader* (5th) published our first statement to the press in full—better late than never.

Of 23 announcements that we examined of the result, 15 (or 65 per cent.) correctly gave Mr. Parkin's Party as (Lab.). May we suggest that the odd eight who called it (Soc.)—*Daily Express*, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Sketch*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Evening Standard*, *Yorkshire Post*, *Newcastle Journal* and *Liverpool Daily Post*—follow in their footsteps next time.

FOOTNOTE

The above summary is based on a collection of 90 cuttings from 42 different newspapers. In some cases the quoted passages were only printed in certain editions of the paper concerned.

The cumulative effect of this publicity is difficult to gauge, but this campaign has certainly brought us wider recognition, more understanding sympathy, and less misrepresentation than hitherto.

S.R.P.

Pie Crust Promises

You have been promised peace, but there are still wars.

You have been promised prosperity, but it is still around the corner.

You have been promised security, but it still eludes you.

You have been promised an end to poverty, but it is still with us.

You have been promised houses, and you are still being promised them.

You have been promised cheaper living costs, and we now have an all time high.

You have been promised anything that seemed a good vote catching stunt.

Now look at the literature that the Labour and Conservative parties are distributing and note that the same old things are still being promised, just re-arranged and dressed up in different words. The cures have not materialised, the promises have either been forgotten or the schemes have been found not to work. The problems still confront you.

Our Common Cause

We of the Socialist Party of Great Britain are, like you, members of the working class. Whether we earn our living in overalls and open-necked shirt, or in a white collar and pin-stripe trousers, or in uniform; whether we are paid by the hour, day, week, month or contract; whether the price we receive for our ability to work is called a wage, a salary, a fee or a stipend—we are all members of a class that needs to find an employer in order to live. Our problems are identical. We have a common cause.

All industry today, whether state controlled or in the hands of private enterprise, is run for the purpose of producing profit. When you and I go to work we produce a wealth of commodities that we leave in the hands of our employers. We receive a wage that enables us to continue to go to work and to rear our families of future wage earners, with very little over. The surplus that we produce over and above what our wages will buy is the store of wealth from which landlords, investors and industrialists draw their rent, interest and profit. In the perpetual pressure to increase that surplus we are goaded to work harder and to produce more for a low wage. We are always at the losing end.

It is this wage-labour and capital basis of society, with its profit making motive, that is the root of all our problems. There is no solution to be found by tinkering with the effects, this form of society must be dug up by the roots.

Glance at some of the tinkering reforms that are offered by our political opponents.

Houses for Whom?

First the ever present housing problem.

There have been innumerable Acts of Parliament aimed at solving the workers' housing problems since the Earl of Shaftesbury introduced the first Bill, in 1851. Despite the efforts of Liberal, Labour and Conservative parties, despite council estates, prefabs and building subsidies, the problem has become more acute with the passing years.

The Fallacy of Full Employment

Why do we fear unemployment? Not usually because we are in love with our jobs but because we cannot live without our wages. The wealthy capitalist has no fear of being out-of-work. For him it is leisure, for us it is idleness.

Although there is a high rate of employment today, it is only maintained by armament production and we know from experience that it is temporary. The fear of unemployment will be with us as long as we remain wage workers.

Who Wins Wars?

Certainly not you and I. Out of the surplus wealth that we pour into the coffers of the employing class, millions are used to maintain armies, navies, air forces, police, law courts, prisons, and all the state machinery necessary to protect capitalist interests and to safeguard the privileges of ownership. But before that surplus can be used for this purpose it must be converted into pounds, shillings and pence—it must be sold in a market.

In the overseas market there are competitors from other countries to be met. The rivalry between different groups of capitalists driving for foreign markets gives rise to friction between states and when diplomatic manoeuvrings fail to ease the friction, war becomes imminent.

Then you and I are subjected to a spate of patriotic propaganda to whip us into a frenzy of hate and we, or our sons, are sent to slaughter our fellow workers who are in the same boat in the rival countries.

War is another evil that springs direct from the wage-labour and capital base of present day society and will remain our sword of Damocles whilst that base is intact.

Reforms Beget Reforms

Much ill health, most crime and nearly all malnutrition can be traced to poverty which is a product of capitalist society. Reforms to alleviate poverty may ease the lot of some of the poor all of the time, or all of the poor some of the time, but no reforms can remove the cause of poverty. A reform that eases one outstanding evil frequently gives rise to others. Just as housing estates can help a few workers who desperately need homes only to find that rents are so high that the larder must suffer.

In the long run, reforms leave the workers in the same harassed condition. Only a complete change in the basis of society can produce a lasting improvement in the lot of the working class.

Non-Socialist "Socialists"

We are not the only ones in this election who call ourselves Socialists. Socialism is an alternative form of society to Capitalism and Capitalism must be abolished to allow Socialist society to be established. You will appreciate that a party that intends to reform Capitalism cannot at the same time, aim to abolish it and, therefore, cannot be a Socialist party.

The Labour Party's statement, "Challenge to Britain," on page 1, mentions Socialism and Socialist measures and implies that the Labour Party is a Socialist party. Yet, from page 28 onwards there are enumerated 86 reforms and promises. The whole statement is designed to kid you that Socialism is some

sort of re-organised Capitalism made to work the way it won't. That most of these 86 reforms have been dangled, carrot fashion, in front of your nose for as far back as you can remember, is evidence of the fact that they are little more than election bait.

The Communist Party is not one whit different in this respect. It competes with the other Capitalist parties in offering bigger and better collections of reforms. Its name is a complete misnomer.

The Lesser Evil

Many of you have told us, on occasions, that you agree with us, but, as there is no immediate prospect of achieving Socialism, it would be better to choose the lesser of two evils by supporting one or other of the Capitalist parties. There is only one evil, that is Capitalism. From it your problems flow. No matter which political party you choose to operate it, the results will differ but little. Offering you the choice of two capitalist parties is like offering the Christmas goose the choice of being baked or boiled. As far as you and I are concerned our goose will be cooked whichever you choose.

What Can Nationalisation Do for Us?

Nothing. Both the Conservative and Labour parties, likewise the Communist party, are in favour of a measure of state control of industry; they differ only in degree. Public utilities, national boards or state commissions are all of a kind. Shareholders may become bondholders, trade union officials may sit upon national executives and rates of interest may be controlled, but the terrible twins, wage-labour and capital, are still there. There are still profits for a few and a bare living wage for you and me.

Gradually Getting Nowhere

That Capitalism can be eased out of existence by the gradual introduction of reforms is another vote-catching red herring. The discontent and antagonisms within Capitalist society make it necessary that it shall be continuously reformed. The sharp edges must be rubbed down. But for every sharp edge that is smoothed away others rise in its place making it essential to introduce more reforms. Hundreds of reforms have been placed upon the statute books of this country but Capitalism is still firmly entrenched and we struggle along on our wages through wars and periods of "national misfortune."

Permanent Sacrifice

We are called upon to make sacrifices to "regain our national independence," to "defend our living standards," to "maintain our national dignity," and for many other high sounding and meaningless reasons. As though you and I have ever done other than make sacrifices, first to build up armaments, then for a war effort, next for post-war reconstruction and then to help over the bad times between wars. There is always an excuse for demanding sacrifices from the

workers. It is about time we stood on our feet and made some drastic changes in a world that could satisfy our needs with plenty but provides us only with plenty of needs.

What Must be Done

You and I can only live by finding employment from those who are able to provide it; we have only our energies to sell; they own the land, mines, factories, machines, tools and transport system and all the things necessary to produce the needs and comforts of life. This ownership must be ended, these things must be converted to the common property of everyone and democratically controlled in the interests of all. Wealth will not then be produced for the profit of a few but will become common-wealth, available to all.

Why it Must be Done

Science and discovery have made it possible for everyone to have a fuller and more pleasurable life but wage-labour and capital bar the way. Millions now engaged in unnecessary tasks such as making bombs and bus tickets, or counting other people's money and advertising catch-penny products, as well as the unemployed of both classes, can be brought into the field of useful production when wage-labour and capital are abolished. Hours of work can be shortened, wars ended and economic security achieved.

And How

Members of the capitalist class can hie themselves off to Bermuda or Balmoral, confident that their interests are secure just so long as you continue to support political parties that will use the forces of "law and order" to ensure to the Capitalist class the continuation of their ownership of the means of life.

When a Socialist working class decides to reconstruct society in keeping with its own interests by dispossessing the Capitalist class, it must first take into its hands the machinery of government. It is with that object that the Socialist Party of Great Britain enters this electoral contest, and why I as a member of that Party am offering myself as your Mandated Delegate.

Now is the Time

During this campaign you will see no posters or window tickets urging you to vote for Waters. We shall indulge in no ballyhoo, boosting or electioneering stunts. We appeal to your understanding and intelligence not to your emotions and prejudices.

If you want Socialism you have got to set about the task of achieving it; no one is going to present it to you on a plate. All we ask is that you consider our case and, if you agree with it, help us to fight for it. We have built our political party in order that you can use it to achieve Socialism. This election is your opportunity, don't miss it.

Comradely yours,

W. WATERS.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Ealing Branch.—The campaign to increase the sales of the SOCIALIST STANDARD continues to make good progress. The number sold during November was 30 dozen, almost half of which were disposed of by canvassing. All members unable, for one reason or

another, to take part in the ordinary run of Branch activity are asked to make a special effort to devote one of their Sunday mornings a month to this useful and rewarding work. A postcard to the Branch Secretary is all that is required, and details of place, date, and

time, will be sent immediately. This is work that all members can do and is first-class propaganda for the Party.

Will all members make a note that we are debating the Labour Party on Friday, 22nd January, at Mellow Lane School, Hayes, Middlesex. The Party representative is C. May and the Labour Party representative is Arthur Skeffington, Labour M.P. for Hayes and Harlington. (See notice elsewhere in this issue.)

Fulham Branch report that their outdoor propaganda meetings held in 1953 at Earls Court and Gloucester Road, Kensington, were very successful, although they were attended by a small number of Branch members. However, after a short spell of apparent apathy on the part of some branch members, activity is being revived. The Branch hopes to stimulate members' interest further by organising a series of lectures to be held every other Thursday at 8 p.m. commencing January 14th, 1954. (For further details see notices.)

Glasgow City and Kelvingrove Branches have done their best to publicise the Socialist Challenge Meeting being held at St. Andrew's Halls on Sunday, 17th January. Will members and sympathisers in the district please note the time and date.

North Paddington By-election.—The voting at the North Paddington By-election was as follows:

B. Parkin (Labour) ...	14,274
J. Eden (Cons.) ...	12,014
W. Waters (S.P.G.B.) ...	242
	P.H.

FORUM AT HEAD OFFICE

Saturday, 2nd January, at 7.30 p.m.

Title:—"The Declaration of Principles and its Implication."
Panel:—W. Read, A. Turner, E. Willmott, C. Wilson.

ISLINGTON PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, 13th January, at 8 p.m. at
Islington Central Library, Holloway Road, N.7.
"Human Nature"—Speaker: J. McGregor.

GLASGOW CITY AND KELVINGROVE MEETINGS

At Central Halls (Bath Street), Glasgow.
Sunday, 10th January, at 7.30 p.m.
"Wages, Prices and Profits"—Speaker: J. Higgins.
Sunday, 24th January, at 7.30 p.m.
"The Role of the Socialist"—Speaker: D. Webster.

ISLINGTON BRANCH MEETINGS

At Co-op. Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7.
Thursday, 7th January, at 8 p.m.
"Nigeria"—J. Millen.
Thursday, 21st January, at 8 p.m.
"How and Why Socialism Will Come"—J. McGregor.

BLOOMSBURY BRANCH DISCUSSION

At Conway Hall, North Room, on
Thursday, January 21st, at 8.30 p.m.
Speaker and Title to be announced.

SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

At Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

- Jan. 3rd NO LECTURE.
.. 10th "Peace Plans Explained"—W. Kerr.
.. 17th "The Role of the State"—R. Ambridge.
.. 24th "Is Marxism Economic Determinism?"—
E. Willmott.
.. 31st "The Idea of Equality"—J. McGregor.
Commencing at 7 p.m. each Sunday.

FULHAM BRANCH LECTURES

- Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6.
Jan. 14th "The Principles of Socialism"—A. Turner.
.. 28th "The Making of Humanity"—S. Parker.
Feb. 11th "Revolution in China"—F. Offord.

LEWISHAM BRANCH LECTURES

- Room 1, Davenport Hall, Rushey Green, Catford.
At 8 p.m. on Mondays.
Jan. 11th "Is Marxism Economic Determinism?"—
E. Willmott.
.. 25th "World Government?"—W. Reid.

CROYDON BRANCH

- The following lectures will be given at 8 p.m. at
Ruskin House, Wellesley Road, Croydon (near West
Croydon Station), on Wednesdays:—
Jan. 13th "Any Questions?"—R. McLaughlin.
.. 27th "Evolution and Society"—F. Bott.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN JANUARY

- Thursdays: Notting Hill Gate, 8 p.m.
Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.
Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 7.30 p.m.
Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.
Hyde Park, 6 p.m.
Sundays: Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m.
White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11.30 a.m.
East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.
Hyde Park, 3 p.m.
Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

- Mondays: Finsbury Square.
Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
Exmouth Market.
Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.
Thursdays: Tower Hill.
Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

- SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box
1440M, Melbourne, Australia.
SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box
115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32,
Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire.
SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O.
Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.
WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED
STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1,
Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 6th and 20th January, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 57, Fareham Avenue, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets alternate Thursdays from 14th January, at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd. (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmer's Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcome. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton Gower, Swansea.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to D. Deutz, 21, Kenilworth Gardens, Seven Kings, Essex.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. "Franelle," Rawreth Lane, Rawreth, Shot. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. 1st and 3rd Thursdays (7th and 21st January) Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 25 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighon. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bows, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., H. Layton, 33, Rommany Road, West Norwood, S.E.27.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wynn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea. Fulham meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 435, Fulham Road, Chelsea, S.W.10.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulhern, 366, Aikenhead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 4th and 18th January, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197 Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Ivimey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 155, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb, 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7-9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. C. Rowan, 39, Ellington Street, Barnsbury, N.7.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec., 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. 9 Vicarage Rd, Kingston (opp. Bentalls).

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushes Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 12th and 26th January, Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 594 Vol. 50 Feb., 1954

PROFITS AND WAGE CLAIMS

THE STORY OF ALBERT

CROMWELL— LORD PROTECTOR

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY (Peasant Rebellion 1381)

ADVERTISING ANALYSED

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The Conflict in Indo-China

TO THE SOUTH OF CHINA lies a collection of states known as Indo-China. Inland are the Buddhist kingdoms of Cambodia and Laos; along the coast in the south is the Colony of Cochin China, the Empire of Annam in the middle and the protectorates of Tonkin in the North. These last three are collectively known as Viet-nam, having recently been incorporated under one administration. The inhabitants are of distant Chinese origin but are under French "protection."

The Cockpit of Asia

As both Asiatic and European conquerors have been aware, Indo-China lying athwart many of the routes to the countries of S.E. Asia, is of strategic importance to those powers seeking to dominate this section of the world.

In 111 B.C. the Chinese annexed the country, and named it An-nam (the pacified South) and held it for 1,000 stormy years, but its history of revolts during that time and since has surely belied its name.

In A.D. 939 a native ruling class seized control and throughout the succeeding centuries repelled various invasions including one of half-million of Kublai Khan's Mongolian hordes. An oriental version of the feudal system was introduced and there were continual wars between the various war lords who were jockeying for control. Nevertheless, there were periods of progress amazingly modern in outlook.

French imperialism started its domination of the scene in 1787 by following the usual procedure of sending in missionaries first, then interference in internal affairs and finally using armed force.

This is a wealthy land for those who can exploit it. Strong sunshine, ample rain and rich soil grow crops which need the minimum of labour. The land abounds in easily accessible minerals. In all of these wars there has been a lot at stake for the contending ruling classes but very little for the actual participants.

An Indo-Chinese Communist

There is a place in Annam—Kim-Lien—which is famed for producing rebels and revolutionaries. Nguyen Tat Than was born there in 1894—the son of a provincial governor who lost his position for excessive brutality towards the people he administered. His sister received nine years forced labour in 1918 for robbery of guns. His brother was condemned by the same tribunal for having sheltered a rebel chief.

Family examples were not the only influential factors on his character.

The French were forcing Western capitalism on this erstwhile feudal country and thus creating economic conditions with the accompanying mental stimulus favourable to revolution. The success of the Japanese in the war against Russia in 1905 exacerbated nationalism in Asia by demonstrating that it was possible for an Asiatic power to get the mastery of a European power. This further encouraged the incipient revolution.

After eight years as a seaman visiting Britain and America Nguyen Tat Than settled in Paris. Here his revolutionary leanings drew him into the Communist movement where he became well known as a writer and lecturer. He was despatched by the U.S.S.R. to China, and, accommodated at the Soviet Embassy, he organised "The Association of the Revolutionary Annamite Youth" amongst the emigrants from Indo-China in the Chinese Republic.

He was expelled from China and organised a Communist Party among the 30,000 Annamite colony in Siam. This Party will probably start to figure in the news if the Communist Party get control of Indo-China.

Then from the apparent safety of the British Colony of Hongkong, he organised a Communist Party in Indo-China itself and this became an independent section of the Communist International in 1951. The British sentenced him to two years' imprisonment, whilst in his absence the government of Indo-China sentenced him to death for his political activities.

Ho Chi-Minh

In 1940, the Japanese military penetration, following the defeat of France in Europe, created conditions which gave his movement a chance of success. Changing his name to Ho Chi Minh (He who Shines) he changed the Indo-China Communist Party into the Viet-Minh (Independence of Viet-nam Party). He rallied support from various sections throughout the country on a programme of Vietnam for the Vietnamese.

American capitalism, with enormous finance awaiting profitable investment, is opposed to other groups controlling sections of the world in their own interests as colonies. It wishes to invest in countries without outside interference from the French or other imperialists. So the Viet-Minh promptly tried for American support by publishing a manifesto opposing continued French control and also putting forward orthodox democratic ideals.

Ho Chi Minh spent another 18 months in a Chinese prison when the Chiang Kai-Shek government realised that he was not helping them but only using their support to develop Indo-China nationalism.

The Thieves fall out

The French, significantly enough, were excluded from the Pacific theatre of war, and in their absence, on the collapse of Japan in 1945, the British occupied Indo-China south of the 16th parallel and the Chinese north of this line.

Both powers found Indo-China to be something of a hornets' nest, for the Viet-Minh had seized a large measure of control and declared the independence of the three sections of Indo-China making up Viet-nam. The British later handed over control of their sector to

the French who then bribed the Chinese to retire from the scene also.

Meanwhile the Viet-Minh (The Nationalist Organisation) had consolidated their position during the confusion resulting from the changeover in governmental control and Ho Chi-Minh emerged temporarily successful. So much so in fact, that the French acknowledged him as a suitable representative for negotiations until he was unmasked as a Communist. From December 1946, the Viet-Minh and the French were locked in a war which Ho Chi-Minh declared would last for 10 years before he emerged as the victor.

The Red River

Seven years have elapsed since then and the war is still taking its toll. The cost of the war to French capitalism to the end of 1953 is estimated at £2,070 millions. Nearly 40,000 youths on the French side alone have died in this struggle to stop Indo-Chinese capitalism from getting on its feet. It is said that 24 per cent. of the total intake of officers in France and 45 per cent. of N.C.O.'s have perished. The Communists do not publish their casualties but presumably these are also considerable.

The Red River of Indo-China, which is so named because it is coloured by the red soil washed down in draining that part of the country, might well have been so named on account of the blood spilt throughout the history of this war-ravaged country.

The French and the Nationalists

The French, helped by American equipment and supplies, have command of the skies and their navy is far superior to that of the rebels. By day they wield an uneasy control chiefly over the heavily populated deltas of the Red and the Mekong Rivers and most of the plains. But the bulk of the population appears to favour the policy of the Viet-Minh. Some are perhaps influenced by a sophisticated oriental custom proven over the centuries, that it pays to have a foot in either camp. The French operate their transport and fighting forces by day. The Viet-Minh operate their mobile guerilla forces and make their moves under cover of darkness when they obtain the support of the local people. Each morning the French find it necessary to send out patrols to clear their roads of ambushes and obstructions before transport can be resumed. Darkness comes suddenly in this part of the world, but before then the last French truck has rumbled into the safety of the fortified areas. The night belongs to the Viet-Minh. Ho Chi-Minh is in control.

F. OFFORD.

DEBATE

"WHICH WAY TO PEACE"

PEACE PLEDGE UNION — G. PLUME
S.P.G.B. — W. READ

Friday, 19th February at 7.30 p.m.

at

Bethnal Green Library, Cambridge Heath Road, E.2.
(Facing Bethnal Green Tube Station)

THE PASSING SHOW

Cap in hand

Most days one may attend the magistrates' courts and see men fined or sent to jail for begging. But the laws against soliciting alms, like many other laws in capitalist society, do not apply to everybody. It is a truism that for one murder a man is executed, but for murdering tens of thousands the reward is not the hangman's rope but a field-marshal's baton. And in certain circles, begging is not only not condemned by the law, it is a practice indulged in by the most eminent and respected. Continental and colonial capitalists send representatives to London and New York to cadge funds: British capitalism goes cap in hand to America. All capitalists, if business is not prospering, besiege their own governments for hand-outs in the form of subsidies and guaranteed prices and markets.

Sturdy Begger

Now Mr. Butler, Chancellor of the Exchequer, has put in an appearance at the soup kitchen. Hardly had the jubilation of the American and Australian capitalists (who financed the search) died down after the recent discovery of oil in Western Australia, when the plaintive voice of this mouthpiece of British capitalism was heard observing that it would be a good thing if Australia shared her oil and uranium with the rest of the Commonwealth—meaning of course British capitalism. (*The Times*, 8-12-53.)

What was the reaction of the British ruling class to this cadging on their behalf? Two days after Mr. Butler had said his piece, it was announced that he had been made a Companion of Honour. Which may have given food for thought to the day's crop of convicted beggars as they were taken away to pay their fines.

Between the Devil . . .

Yet another proposal about how to avoid war is put forward by Bertrand Russell in the "Reader's Digest" (January, 1954). The sub-heading is "A world famous philosopher proposes a practical plan to avert war." How practical is this plan? It is based on the theory that "a great war would be as disastrous to the victors as to the vanquished"; and Earl Russell believes that a conference should be held with the sole business of drawing up a statement of the sufferings to be expected among all the belligerents in a future war. This would make each side believe that the other could not wish to plunge the world into so much misery, and would thus reduce the mutual suspicion which the author sees as the chief danger to world peace.

This theory is based on a misleading premise. It may be true that in material destruction and loss of human life a new world war would be equally disastrous to each side. But the question which Bertrand Russell has evaded is this—what advantages could each side hope to gain only through war? And even more important, what disadvantages could each side hope to avoid only through war?

. . . and the deep blue sea

If any country was going to suffer just as much whether it won or lost in a future war, then there would be no more wars. But under capitalism there have been wars and there will be wars, simply because there are still advantages to be gained from it. These advantages may be more negative than positive. The British ruling class went to war both in 1914 and 1939 not so much to gain new markets and sources of raw material, as to preserve those they had. The German capitalists went to war twice to try to muscle in on British markets; Britain went to war twice to prevent them doing it. The advantages which the British ruling class hoped to get, and did get, were none the less real because they were only temporary. Twice Britain staved off the challenge of one of the younger capitalist powers, and, as against that power, kept her position in the world. It is one of the ironies of contemporary politics that within a few years of the second of these titanic struggles an even greater danger to British capitalism has arisen in the shape of Russia and its satellites, and the British ruling class is so afraid of this new threat that it is prepared to stand aside and see German capitalism building itself up again, so that it will be a barrier against any further westward expansion of the Russian empire.

It is obvious that a third world war might lead to destruction on a scale so far unknown in human history, and compared with which the fate of Nagasaki and Hiroshima would seem mild. Few states want to go to war; but in the conditions of capitalist society, it is often—in the eyes of the rulers of each state—the lesser of two evils.

Sound and fury

Who is for democracy? Who is for freedom of thought? To read his speeches, no one more than the Pope. How he thunders at the iniquitous countries where Catholics are denied freedom of worship and expression; and he is quite right to thunder. But actions are a better guide to real belief than words; and when we examine conditions in some Catholic countries, the Pope's protestations are seen in a different light. In Colombia last September, all Colombian Protestant pastors were expelled from areas totalling three-fourths of the country, and all forms and ceremonies of Protestant worship were forbidden (*British Weekly*, 7-1-54). If ever there was religious persecution, here it is in Colombia. Is the Pope against religious persecution? He says he is. But why does he do nothing in Colombia, where the Catholic Church itself is the persecutor? The only conclusion one can draw is that the Pope is against persecution of Catholics, but not persecution by Catholics.

New Comrade

In Spain, the story is the same. Politically no opposition is allowed to the Falangist Party. In religion, since the civil war it has been illegal to propagate any faith except Catholicism. "In Barcelona recently a

Protestant pastor was fined the equivalent of £750 because he told a man the time of his church service." (*Reynolds News*, 13-9-53.) Does the Pope condemn Franco for this? On the contrary, he publicly signifies his satisfaction with this loyal son of his church. He has decided to make Franco a knight of the Supreme Order of Christ (*The Times*, 23-12-53). One can only wonder what the titular head of the order thinks of his new comrade.

Pidgin English

Those who argue that Socialism can never be understood by the world's so-called "backward races" often cite in support of their case the curious dialect called "pidgin English." "How can the Polynesians and Australian black-fellows understand Socialism," they say, "when they can't even speak English properly?" The phrase "pidgin English" thus has a flavour of contemptuous pity about it. But this contempt is surely misplaced. This column is written in a mixture of pidgin Latin and pidgin Anglo-Saxon; which is the only language the writer knows. Other varieties of pidgin Latin—French, Spanish, Italian, Roumanian—are spoken over a large part of Europe; so are these nations too to be ruled incapable of understanding Socialism? When one nation takes over the language of another, it is usually simplified and thus made a better means of communication by the discarding of many of the case- and verb-endings, which are often superfluous. Pidgin English is merely carrying this process a stage farther.

I go—I come back

Many organisations and movements have clamoured for the allegiance of the workers during the twentieth century, all claiming some panacea, some new device which would, at long last, make capitalism palatable. The Jewish workers have been exposed to all the usual propaganda, but for them the basic issue of twentieth-century society—Capitalism or Socialism—has been even further confused by the Zionist Movement. This claimed that the problems of Jewry could only be solved by the establishment of one single homeland for Jews, a Jewish state. Like many other reformist movements, the Zionists have now had a chance to work out their theories in practice; Israel has been established. What evidence is there as to whether Jewish workers are any happier in capitalist Israel than they are in capitalist Britain or America? The figures of Jews going into Israel and Jews coming out of Israel afford some indication. Here is a quotation from *The Times*, 19-12-53:

"Since Israel became a State five years and a half ago, 38,263 of its citizens have emigrated. The outward flow caused little concern when immigration greatly exceeded it; but to-day more Israelis are leaving the country for good than are coming in to settle, and the number of departures is steadily increasing. . . . Some 15,000 emigrants went to Europe, of whom 5,168 are said to be in France. About 850 went back to countries behind the Iron Curtain."

So conditions in Israel are not even attractive enough to keep eight hundred and fifty of its emigrants from returning to the countries of Stalinist dictatorship!

Zionism hasn't established a workers' paradise any more than Stalinism has. The sole fruit of the decades

of struggle and strife which Zionism has known has been—the establishment of yet another capitalist state. Which is an achievement the workers of the world, Jewish and Gentile, white and black, could well have done without.

Nobler by far

Most of the claims of the Labour Party are well publicised. They nationalised this, established state control over that, regulated the other. But one of their triumphs has so far received insufficient acclaim. The *Daily Herald* mentioned it on January 1st, when giving details of the new Honours List. It said "The Tory habit of creating baronets—stopped under the Labour Government—is continued." It is a little difficult at first to see why even the most enthusiastic supporter of the Labour Party should consider it a gain that the capitalists in the Labour Government's Honours Lists should have been made barons and viscounts instead of baronets. It might even seem a disadvantage, since the nobler members of our aristocracy—barons upwards—are normally entitled to a seat in the House of Lords, while baronets are left out in the cold. Perhaps the gain lay in the Labour Government's hope that the lords created by them would vote for them; perhaps the prejudice against baronets was caused by an early diet of Victorian melodrama, in which the wicked Sir Jasper was almost always a bart.

Well, whatever the reason for it, there it is, enshrined among the other proud boasts of the Labour Party, warming the hearts of our reformers as they march onwards towards their next day-to-day task.

JOSHUA.

DENISON HOUSE

296 Vauxhall Bridge Road, Victoria, S.W.1.

SUNDAY MARCH 7th

7 p.m. prompt

1904 **50** 1954

YEARS OF SOCIALISM

Third meeting in series of four

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Speakers: R. COSTER & H. YOUNG

★

Concluding meeting on Sunday, April 4th

"The Socialist Future"

Speakers: C. May and A. Turner

CROMWELL, LORD PROTECTOR

JUST over three hundred years ago, on December 16th, 1653, Oliver Cromwell took the oath as Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland. The occasion of the ter-centenary of this event summoned forth a number of articles in the Press. Maurice Ashley, in *The Times* (15-12-53) was shocked to find how far the materialist conception of history (though, of course, seldom acknowledged as such) has spread among the younger school of historians. He quotes an Oxford historian as having tried to show "that Cromwell represented 'the men of the new wealth' who purposed to overthrow the established ruling classes," and goes on,

"An older generation of university historians would rub their eyes at so fanciful an economic interpretation of history. Could any reader of Cromwell's letters and speeches, they might ask, genuinely picture him as an upstart moved by jealousy and greed, or any student of contemporary tracts suppose that religion had not been a central fact in the puritan revolution?"

This article does not propose to discuss the place of Puritanism in the Great Rebellion; this has been done with consummate skill by Professor R. H. Tawney in "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism." But it is proposed to enquire how far the picture of Cromwell as the representative of the men of new wealth is a true one.

Marching with the Band in Front

It is of course possible for a leader or figurehead to be motivated (so far as he himself understands his motives) entirely by religious considerations, while his "followers" are acting to protect or advance their economic interests. "Followers" is put in quotation marks because in such a case the great mass of men making up the movement would not be followers at all; the leader only "marches with the band in front" like children do. The movement only follows such a person because it is in the interest of those making up the movement to do so. As soon as the "leader" gets out of step, he finds that the movement has pursued its own course, and he has been left a general without an army. For example, Mohammed, a religious fanatic got his big chance when the inhabitants of Medina invited him to come and rule over them. This they did not because of religious conviction, but because they wanted to share in the profits of religious pilgrimages, which were then going entirely to the great rival of Medina, Mecca. Five hundred years later, the call of successive Popes to the faithful to go on Crusade against the Saracens was successful not because of religious enthusiasm, but because there was a surplus of younger sons in the great landed houses who in this way carved out for themselves estates in the Middle East. In such cases, is the root cause of the movement in what inspires the leader, or in what inspires the "followers"? For as Sir Ernest Barker put it, "what makes national history most is the action not of lonely leaders, but of big battalions; and by big battalions I mean social groups." (Introduction to I. D. Jones' "The English Revolution 1603—1714.")

Righteous judgment

Even if it is allowed, then, that the Great Rebellion was caused by the emergence of a new class of men made rich by large-scale trading, allied to the class

of yeomen or small landowners who were found chiefly in the south-eastern counties, we must still consider if Cromwell himself was inspired mainly by puritanism. There is some evidence for this view, but more against it. First, the evidence for this view.

Certainly Cromwell, like the Kaiser, was always sure that God was on his side. When he was faced with the task of subjugating a rebellious Ireland, in 1649, he stormed Drogheda; of the 3,000 troops which had defended it, he himself wrote "I believe we put to the sword the whole number of the defendants, I do not think thirty of the whole number escaped with their lives. Those that did, are in safe custody for Barbadoes"—that is, were sold into slavery. This bloody work he described as "a righteous judgment of God," and he wrote back to the Speaker of the House of Commons more fully:

"Sir, what can be said of these things? Is it the arm of the flesh that hath done these things? Is it the wisdom and counsel, or strength of man? It is the Lord only. God will curse that man and his house that dares to think otherwise. Sir, you see the work is done by a Divine leading."

Cromwell then stormed Wexford, slaughtered the garrison there too, and wrote again to the Speaker that "God hath blessed you with a great tract of land in longitude alongst the shore." It is curious that a full knowledge of this butchery does not prevent our modern Nonconformists claiming Cromwell as a blood brother, inspired by the Holy Scriptures.

Stubble to our swords

After some months of this, Cromwell left to his lieutenants the work of murdering and enslaving the Irish, and himself went north to deal with Scotland. Though at first the English army seemed in a perilous situation, Cromwell wrote "We have much hope in the Lord, of whose mercy we have had large experience." On this occasion the Lord's mercies took tangible shape in the battle of Dunbar, where 3,000 Scots were killed or injured, and 10,000 captured. After the battle Cromwell boasted that "the Lord made them as stubble to our swords." Further evidence may be found in the well-known fact that before the battle Cromwell gave the command to sing a Psalm; surely this means that he was motivated by religion? But on further consideration, one observes that Cromwell chose none of the bloodthirsty Psalms, of which usually he was inordinately fond; for example, Psalm 110 (the Lord "shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries") or Psalm 69 ("Let them be blotted out of the book of the living")—or many more. Psalm 117, which Cromwell chose, is a very mild one, with nothing to recommend it—except its brevity; of all the 150 Psalms, this is the shortest, having only two verses. The moral perhaps is that if Cromwell hadn't been attentive at Sunday School, he might well have chosen Psalm 119, which has one hundred and seventy six verses; and the Scots would have been able to withdraw to the trackless moors in their rear before the English army had finished Psalming at them.

Providence seemed to lead us

These examples of the pious-sounding words used

by Cromwell could be multiplied many times. "The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell" by Thomas Carlyle, is full of instances. But to find the true character of a man, and the true reasons for his policies, it is always necessary to examine not only his words but also his deeds. And we find that both Cromwell's home and his foreign policy were shaped by the desires of the commercial class, not by any religious abstractions.

In 1651 England went to war with Holland, in spite of the fact that the brand of religion professed by the Dutch was very similar to that of the Puritans themselves. It is true that at that time Cromwell had not yet become Protector, but he was already so outstanding a figure in the Government, as well as being Commander-in-chief of the army, that the Rump would not have dared to take any action of which he disapproved. The cause of this war was unashamedly commercial—the Rump had passed the Navigation Act, which was an attempt to win back the carrying trade of England and the colonies from the Dutch. Cromwell brought this war to a successful conclusion in 1654, and then turned his attention to the Spanish Empire. England had a large navy at the end of the Dutch War, the Spanish West Indies were inadequately defended, and altogether, as Cromwell himself said, "Providence seemed to lead us" to an unprovoked aggression against Spain. This war gained Jamaica and Dunkirk (also previously a Spanish possession) for the English Empire. As it happened, Spain was a Catholic power, which suggests the view that the war was really a war of religion; but since England was at the same time allied with another Catholic Power, France, this view is untenable.

First to his Englishmen

Even Cromwell's speeches themselves show us that he was by no means blind to economic considerations. In a speech to the first Parliament elected under the Instrument of Government, in 1654, he bemoaned the fact that the trade of the nation was ruined and the manufacture of cloth at a standstill for want of a market. (This market Cromwell attempted to provide by attacking the Spanish Empire.) In another speech to the same Parliament he pointed with pride to the fact that the Sound, leading into the Baltic, was now open, and said "that which was and is the strength of this nation, the shipping, will now be supplied thence"—with rope, masts, pitch and tar. Cromwell even carried his patriotism into his religion. G. M.

Trevelyan tells us in "England under the Stuarts" that Cromwell held, along with his secretary Milton, that God revealed himself "as His manner is, first to His Englishmen."

A study of Cromwell's home policy reveals plainly the same lesson. Some of the reforms carried out under the Commonwealth, although they were all held to be nullities at the Restoration, were immediately re-enacted by the extreme anti-Puritan Anglicans who held power after 1660—for example, the Navigation Act, the provision in the Instrument of Government for triennial Parliaments, and the abolition of the system of holding land by military tenure. Many more of Cromwell's reforms and policies were abolished in 1660, only to be resuscitated later. Among these were the abolition of the monarchy (since the last century this country has been, in effect, "a crowned Republic"); the reform of the franchise; the unification of Ireland and Scotland with England in one united Commonwealth, and free trade within that Commonwealth; the reform of the court of Chancery, and an attempt to codify the common law; the abolition of patronage in the Church of England, and the establishment of civil marriage; the maintenance of a fleet permanently in the Mediterranean; and the setting-up of an efficient system of local government and police (which is called in the history books "the rule of the Major-Generals"). These reforms and policies were not brought back all at the same time. Some were re-enacted by the High Church Anglicans of Queen Anne's reign; some by the Low Church, freethinking Whigs of the eighteenth century; and some by men of all shades of religious belief, and of none, in the nineteenth century. All these men were very different, in point of religion, from the sternly Puritan and evangelic Cromwell. What they had in common with him was not any particular set of religious principles, but the desire to preserve and extend the interests of the commercial class, and to carry out the reforms in the structure of society desired by that class. Cromwell genuinely thought of himself as a chosen instrument of God, carrying out God's will. But no newly-emerging ruling class has ever been accurate about its motives. Every man likes to credit himself with higher motives than the pursuit of self- or class-interests. But it is what a man does, not what he says, that shows what he is: and Cromwell's policies reveal him to have been, just as much as his comrades-in-arms, a man of the middle class.

JENKIN.

ADVERTISING ANALYSED

A Capitalist Industry

ADVERTISING is nothing new, you say? Yes it's true, as the encyclopedia will tell you, that in ancient Egypt somebody wrote on a piece of papyrus "to disseminate information for commercial purposes." But advertising as we know it today is something of much more recent origins. Its growth coincided with the great development of the newspaper and periodical press in the latter half of the 19th century. Since then, the perfection of mechanical methods of reproducing illustrations, and such inven-

tions as radio and television, have enabled advertising to play an even greater role in capitalist society.

Although there can be no one who is not familiar with examples of advertising, it is perhaps as well to start off with a definition. Dr. N. H. Borden (*The Economic Effects of Advertising*) suggests the following:

"Advertising includes those activities by which visual or oral messages are addressed to the public for the purpose of informing them and influencing them either to buy merchandise or to act or be inclined favourably toward ideas, institutions or persons featured."

This is quite a good beginning, but it obviously doesn't tell us very much about the relationship of advertising to other features of society. We may at once note that the main purpose is not to inform the public, but to persuade them to take some action which will be of benefit to the advertiser. The object of advertising is to sell something—its defenders are quite right in saying that it is necessary for trade, and that its proper function is to create demand. But the trade is necessary only to a system that is based on production for sale with a view to profit, and the demand is not need, but the ring of hard cash on the counter.

Advertising, then, has a specific task to perform in capitalist society. Since it is associated with selling rather than buying, it expresses, broadly speaking, the interests of sellers of commodities. Some capitalists, however, do not have such an interest in advertising as others—and if they are more concerned with production than distribution they may regard it as something unpleasant, like taxation, to be avoided if possible, or cut to a minimum. There are consequently two schools of thought about advertising among those who support Capitalism: its defenders and its critics. Socialists, on the other hand, are distinguished from both these schools of thought, because we do not accept their basic premise that Capitalism must continue.

The Defence of Advertising

We may first take a look at the arguments that are put forward in support of advertising. Here are some typical points:

- (a) It enables the public to be informed about new commodities.
- (b) It offers an incentive by picturing ideals for us.
- (c) The alternative to competitive advertising would be state monopoly.
- (d) It makes possible mass production (this point is also a criticism of advertising).
- (e) It promotes trust in "branded goods."

Examining these claims separately, we find that:

(a) The primary purpose of advertising is *not* to give information which will be of benefit to the public. There are some cases in which it is in the interest of advertisers to withhold information, or to give only one side of the picture—and they consequently do so. Do the makers of patent medicines, whose bottles are labelled in shillings, disclose the fact that the contents are valued in farthings? Are the purveyors of toothpaste only awaiting a favourable opportunity of informing the public that toothpaste is nothing more than a slight cleansing aid, and that some dental specialists advise the use of a plain salt solution, or baking soda, or precipitated chalk, for cleaning the teeth?

We are not just singling out certain advertisers to attack. The nature of Capitalism is such that all of us at some time have to advertise, rather than to give information. If you are a plumber, you find that to widely advertise the simplicity with which a tap washer may be replaced will help to put you out of a job. And when you go for another job, you are more inclined to give the favourable references and to withhold facts which the prospective employer may deem unfavourable. He, of course, won't tell you straight

away all you are expected to do for the money he pays you—and so on.

(b) Advertising, it is said, pictures ideals for us, stirring dreams and hopes of things which are "just a little better." And what are these ideals? A perusal of the press advertisements or the hoardings will give some indication. A's cigarettes last a little longer, B's washing powder cleans a little whiter, C's coats fall apart a little less quickly. But only until you read about D's cigarettes and E's washing powder and F's coats. These things surely can't be the ideals, for they are with us already (and how we wish they weren't!). It is those other advertisements that must be the ones—"Use Our Banking Facilities," "Mechanise Your Office," "Fly To Australia Quicker!" Yet such activities are all tied up with business and only business people can be concerned with them.

Advertisers of all commodities endeavour to persuade the public to buy. The wages system decrees that people shall buy only up to the amount of wages paid. Competition for your custom is thus not to get you to spend more in total, but to get you to buy *this* rather than *that*.

(c) The critics of advertising are accused of wanting to create a state monopoly of advertising services. To socialists, state Capitalism is equally as undesirable as private-enterprise Capitalism. It follows that we hold that government-controlled information services are equally as pernicious as commercial advertising. We propose a form of society in which there will be no advertising, but in which access to all available information will be given to all.

(d) It is quite true that advertising makes possible mass production. It is also true that the combination of mass production and advertising under Capitalism means that production determines the *wants* of people instead of satisfying their needs. The distinction is an important one. Today the advertisers' announcements are an inducement to buy articles in quantity rather than in quality. Ever-changing fashion emphasises superficial appearances—whether in clothes or motor-cars—and wants the old to be scrapped to create a market for the new. As socialists see it, the sort of mass production that goes with mass persuasion (advertising) is typical of capitalist society. Socialism, on the other hand, means that the satisfaction of people's needs, both as producers and consumers, comes first, and emphasises that machines are made for man, not vice versa.

(e) It is claimed that goods branded by the advertiser's name are better than "anonymous" alternatives. Of the customer, F. P. Bishop writes "she knows exactly what she is buying, and does not have to trust a retailer whom she has never seen before and may never see again." This underlines the antagonistic relationship between buyer and seller. Notice that it is not a matter of there being trust between the parties concerned, but of avoiding the placing of such trust. What an indictment of the system! And it is not only the customer who suffers—what about the retailer (particularly the small one) whose customers are urged to haggle with him and to "beat him down"?

The branding of goods may be a defensive weapon

(Continued on page 25)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

FEBRUARY,



1954

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

PROFITS AND WAGE CLAIMS

DURING the past two years there has been some change in the nature of the reply given by employers to wage claims. When the Labour Government was in office and prices and profits were rising steadily they would refer to that government's exhortations on the subject of "wage-restraint," and back this up with reminders from the same source about the need for low-priced exports to hard currency countries "to close the dollar gap." Latterly the dollar gap has been shrouded over and new arguments against wage increases have been found. One is that the rise of prices has slackened off and in recent months the level has remained more or less stable. Another is that profits have been falling. The third is that foreign competition has been intensified, following German and Japanese recovery and greater American interest in exports.

According to the comprehensive records published by the *Financial Times*, relating to over 2,900 firms, profits began to fall in the company reports published during the last quarter of 1952 (relating of course to a 12 month period ending some time earlier than that quarter). The fall continued, though not all industries or companies were affected, and the profits of industrial companies reporting during the year 1953 showed a drop of eight per cent. compared with the results of the year before (*Financial Times*, 9th January, 1954): Engineering and shipbuilding were two groups that showed a small decline in 1953.

On the other hand, while profits were falling, the amount of profit paid out as dividends has increased during the past two years as government pressure for the "dividend freeze" relaxed.

In this situation, with workers pressing hard for wage increases and some of the employers worried about keener competition and falling prices and profits, business men and politicians are alike anxiously

assessing the prospect of increasing dislocation of industry through strikes and lockouts. Accurate forecasting of what will happen is impossible because several of the factors can only be guessed at. While it is accepted now as a fact that some contraction has begun in American business, nobody knows how serious it will become. (It is even possible that the unexpected entry of Russia into world markets making substantial purchases with gold may give a fillip to exports.) In the meantime the compilers of the *Financial Times* profits analysis think that company reports published during the first half of 1954 will show a renewed increase of profits (*Financial Times*, 9th January, 1954). If this estimate of present business conditions proves to be correct and if market conditions do not worsen generally, the employers and the Government may go on making small concessions rather than face large strikes. It is, however, not a simple decision for either of them; the employers are divided on the issue and the Government has to think of votes and elections. So far its policy has been to avoid a clash. As the "Economist" remarks:—"It wants to avoid a pitched battle for as long as possible." ("Economist" 9th January, 1954.) In particular the Tories do not want to present the Opposition with an electoral battle cry.

"There is much to be said for the Government's policy; it is very unfortunate for them that Labour should have run through its term of office without being compelled by economic circumstances to stand up to the unions, and that the first test case should come in the first post-war tenure of office by a Tory government."—*Economist*, 9/1/54.

The workers will be acting on sound lines as trade unionists in being prepared to test the situation by strike action for limited objectives provided that they do not swallow the two dangerous myths being offered to them now by Labour and Communist propagandists. The former are pretending that the workers can raise their wages by supporting further nationalisation—as if the nationalised boards' insistence on profits with which to pay compensation interest to the former owners is any less harsh than the profit seeking of private capitalists. The Communists, while also supporting nationalisation (but not mentioning that in Russia too every State concern has to make profits for the Government, to be used along with other Government revenue to pay the bondholders) are also encouraging the notion that there are prospects of very large gains for the workers if only they will go in for prolonged and wide-spread strikes. Both lines of propaganda indicate blind disregard of the real position of the working class in the capitalist system. If and when the workers decide that what capitalism offers is not worth having their remedy is not to waste their votes on nationalisation and Labour Governments or to batter themselves to pieces against the State forces but to organise for the achievement of Socialism.

**DON'T
FORGET**

DENISON HOUSE *

"Socialist Theory in the Light
of Modern Development"

Sunday, February 7th, 7 p.m.

(Continued from page 23)

in the battle of the shop counter, but why must we have the battle?

The Case against Advertising

We have seen that advertising comes under serious criticism from those who otherwise accept the buying and selling basis of Capitalism. Socialists are not so much concerned with the purely financial issue of whether advertising makes commodities dearer or not. We examine it in its social setting. Our question is not: is advertising good or bad? but; what sort of system is it that produces advertising, and is there an alternative system?

Let us take a few typical criticisms of advertising:

(a) It has helped to promote *acquisitiveness* to the status of a prime virtue. "Much advertising thrives on discontent, with one's pay, physique or environment—or may create discontent where there was none before . . . There cannot be contentment in a constant struggle for money to meet the demands of the advertisements . . . High pressure advertising could only exist in a society which had created insecurity, anxiety and neuroses on a large scale." (Denys Thompson, *Voice of Civilisation*.)

We must not over-emphasise the ability of advertising to "create discontent." It is being increasingly recognised that discontent is not the result of agitation by individuals, but arises from the actual conditions in which individuals find themselves. Mr. Thompson's analysis of the situation is commendable—we only wish that he had indicated a positive alternative to the society he criticised.

(b) Advertising deliberately stimulates the least worthy desires and appeals to anti-social motives. In the interest of business, advertisers concentrate on developing those desires which respond most quickly to their stimulus and which are likely to be followed by the most profitable sales.

Most advertising is designed, not to encourage the consumer's critical faculties, but to lull them, and to play upon the emotions. We see advertisements which appeal to snobbery, vanity, luxury, envy, greed—and, above all, to fear. The advertiser plays upon fear in every possible form, fear of ill-health, of losing one's job, of growing old, of being thought inferior, of being "different," and so on. You can open any newspaper and be almost sure of finding at least one example. The writer's particular *bête noir* is an insurance company's advertisement depicting a worried-looking man getting more and more desperate as he approaches his retirement ("whatever shall I do without a pension?").

(c) Advertising is largely concerned with promoting the sale of articles which have been standardised for mass production; it aims at the creation of a standardised mass mind. The kind of character that

advertising would like to produce has a well-developed herd feeling, anxious to be like others in appearance and opinion, and intolerant of originality.

F. P. Bishop, in *The Ethics of Advertising*, attributes the following statement to an American advertising expert:

"I'm not discussing the merits or demerits of an economic system. Whether we would or no, you and I have to live under that system, and since there seemed to be no practical alternative within immediate reach, do our best to make it work to the advantage of every citizen. I think, as advertising people, we've tried to do just that. But *not through truth in advertising*. . . 'Pandering to the lowest taste'—of course we do! We have one specific job to do—and it's not social reform but *selling our client's goods*." (Italics Mr. Bishop's.)

(d) One of the most important ingredients in "successful" advertising is *concealment of motive*. Of course, it would be naive of us to expect advertisers to say "buy my goods and help me make a profit." Nevertheless, the necessity on their part to conceal that underlying motive inevitably leads to mis-representation. The law allows them quite a wide latitude in extolling the merits of their goods. F. P. Bishop quotes the case of an auctioneer who told a purchaser of land that it was "very fertile and improveable" whereas it turned out to be partly useless. But the Court held that the words used were a "mere flourishing description" by the salesman, and would not intervene to upset the bargain.

It is sometimes said that the motto "Caveat emptor" (Let the buyer beware!) is less applicable today than in the bad old days of unscrupulous, cut-throat competition. But it's the same dirty game, even though the rules may have been tightened up a bit.

Socialist Information

Unlike the advertising expert quoted above, socialists *are* concerned with the merits and demerits of an economic system. In the society we propose as an alternative to the present, the fullest information on all subjects will be freely available to all. Since interests will be harmonious instead of antagonistic, the question of certain information being falsified or withheld will not arise, because no one could benefit from such action.

It is difficult to foresee just how things will work out when conditions are freed from capitalist influences, but it is reasonable to suppose that people will be more critical and discerning about the material things of life. For example, instead of the labelled and advertised tin, we can imagine fresh, simple and healthy foods which will go more or less direct from local producer to consumer. Not the vulgar "materialism" of Capitalism, but the consciousness of fulfilling desires without loss of human dignity—that will be the aim.

S.R.P.

WHAT IS RELIGION?—(continued)

PRAYER gives some people relief, just as does swearing to others. Some prefer chain smoking or drinking to the point of getting drunk as the best means of drowning their sorrows. Apart from self-relief, prayers give to those who say them, an assurance

which they seek. From this aspect it would appear to be somewhat similar to wishful thinking. Prayer may act psychologically like auto-suggestion, especially if it is applied to some aid which one requires for oneself, as distinct from prayers for others, or prayers for better

weather, etc.

As would be expected the priests were not slow to capitalise prayers and make a profession of saying them for others. The Catholic priests have been active at the game for centuries and have persuaded many a poor man to give his savings, as well as the rich to give large sums of money to the church, i.e., the institution or business of the priests. The saying of mass for the soul after death continued the good work paid for in advance by the living, or by his or her relatives. The priests are supposed to be especially good at saying prayers, writing them and reading them, and often learn Latin (the chief language of God) for that purpose. How God knows all the different languages and can understand millions of prayers uttered at the same time from dozens of different lands is one of those mysteries about which we hear nothing.

One would have thought that in a modern civilised community, run on mass production lines and the latest ideas of capitalism, machines would have been invented to say prayers by the million, by the pressing of a button. Especially would this be valuable during war-time, when prayer machines could work day and night asking for divine assistance for victory, or don't the ruling class believe in the usefulness of evoking God's assistance at such a critical time?

When nations go to war they all claim that God is on their side; in the last war the Russians did not

hesitate to call out the priests who had been in cold storage for some years. In the first World War the Germans made a great point of "Gott mit uns" but apparently after being so badly let down were very hesitant in evoking God's assistance in the second war. No doubt the Christian clergy of the allies would jubilantly declare "that is why they lost." The old dictum is still true, that "God is on the side of the big battalions" (or with the strongest armies), or "trust in God and keep your powder dry." Since capitalism came into existence these later precepts have come to be the ones which have been followed very carefully, while too much reliance on God to help is thought to be bad military strategy.

"God heard the embittered nations pray and shout
God this, God that, and God the other thing,
'Good God,' said God, 'I've got my work cut out'."

If, as the Christians tell us, God knows everything, then prayer is merely telling God what God already knows. In which case it is a sheer waste of time on the part of those who offer them, as well as a distracting force to God. On the other hand if they are trying to persuade God to do something which he has no intentions of doing, then prayer is wicked, because it attempts to alter God's infallible intentions. They can't have it both ways.

H. JARVIS.

(To be continued.)

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY—5

Peasant Rebellion 1381

"... that the offender be dragged to the gallows; that he be hanged by the neck and then cut down alive; that his entrails be taken out and burned while he is yet alive; that his head be cut off; that his body be divided into four parts and that his head and quarters be at the King's disposal."

That, with additional provisions, was the punishment known as being hanged, drawn and quartered which Mr. E. S. Turner informs us was supposed to have originated in the reign of King Edward I of England. (*Roads to Ruin*, by E. S. Turner. Pages 83-84.)

That was the punishment meted out to John Ball by Lord Chief Justice, Robert Tresilian on July 15th, 1381, at St. Albans. Others who were prominent in the peasant rising of 1381 met similar fates. William Grindcobbe of St. Albans with fifteen others was subjected to the lesser penalty of being hanged and drawn without quartering. Jack Straw, John Kerby and Alan Threder were killed without trial in London; John Shirle at Cambridge and John Wright with George Dunsby at Norwich were hanged; Geoffrey Litster of East Anglia was hanged drawn and quartered and his quarters sent to Norwich, Harwich, Lynn and Yarmouth to strike terror into other prospective rebels. John Wrawe of Sudbury turned king's evidence and escaped punishment for twelve months, being hanged in June 1382. The man who gave his name to the rebellion, Wat Tyler of Colchester, after being severely wounded at Smithfield, was dragged from a hospital bed in St. Bartholomew's by William Walworth, Lord Mayor of London, beheaded and his head paraded around London on the end of Walworth's lance. So, the Feudal nobility of the 14th century took its revenge for

the fright the rebellion had given them. The gibbets all over the eastern and southern counties of England were loaded.

By the beginning of the 14th century in England, feudalism was pregnant with the embryo capitalism. Commerce was developing, a merchant class was arising, the use of money was expanding, peasants were commuting feudal services for money payments and the nobility, as anxious as the peasantry to escape its feudal obligations, was squeezing more and more wealth from the merchants and peasants to maintain the feudal state and to indulge in parasitic luxury.

Into this state of affairs, in the middle of the century, came the great pestilence known as The Black Death which, it is estimated, mortally affected between one-third and one-half of the entire population of this country. The peasants and wage workers who survived the plague were in an advantageous position. Wages rose whilst more poor peasants became wage workers. Other peasants, striving to produce for a regional market instead of for a feudal lord, became more wealthy. Although the wealthier peasants did not object to accumulating their wealth at the expense of their poorer brethren, they did object to contributing considerable sums to the nobility.

In an attempt to control the situation the ruling class introduced the Ordinance and Statutes of Labourers by which they tried to fix wages at a low level, bind the worker and peasant closer to his lord and master, and to keep prices at a "reasonable level." The efforts to enforce these things gave rise to many local acts of resistance.

Throughout the country there wandered a number of poor priests who preached as much against the corruption of the feudal nobility as they did in favour of the Christian heaven. One such was John Ball. Jean Froissart, the contemporary historian, tells us in his "Chronicles," that John Ball,

"... was accustomed to assemble a crowd round him in the market place and preach to them. On such occasions he would say, 'My good friends, matters cannot go well in England until all things be held in common; when there shall be neither vassals nor lords; when the lords shall be no more masters than ourselves. How ill they behave to us? For what reason do they thus hold us in bondage? Are we not all descended from the same parents, Adam and Eve? And what can they show, or what reason can they give, why they should be more masters than ourselves? They are clothed in velvet and rich stuffs, ornamented with ermine and other furs, while we are forced to wear poor clothing. They have wine, spices and fine bread, while we have only rye, and the refuse of the straw, and when we drink, it must be water. They have handsome seats and manors, while we must brave the wind and rain in our labours in the field; and it is by our labours that they have wherewith to support their pomp. We are called slaves, and if we do not perform our service we are beaten, and we have no sovereign to whom we can complain or would be willing to hear us. Let us go to the King and remonstrate with him, he is young and from him we may obtain a favourable answer, and if not we must ourselves seek to amend our conditions.'—(Quoted by Fagan and Hilton in "The English Rising of 1381," page 99.)

A Parliament met in Northampton in 1380 and decided to levy a very heavy Poll Tax on the peasantry to help pay for the expensive war with France. The tax was made progressive by providing some relief for the very poor at the expense of the wealthier peasant. This united the whole of the peasantry in opposition, the wealthier members frequently giving the lead in evading the tax and resisting the collectors.

On May 20th, 1381, there rode into Brentwood in Essex, one, Thomas Bampton, a tax Commissioner. He summoned the inhabitants of Fobbing, Corringham and Stanford-le-Hope to appear before him. They came, armed and led by Thomas Baker of Fobbing. When Bampton tried to arrest Baker the villagers attacked Bampton and his party and drove them out of the town. This was the beginning.

A similar event took place at Gravesend. Abel Ker of Erith led a party against a monastery, then crossed the Thames, joined up with another group at Barking, recrossed the river and marched to Dartford where Ker handed over his command to Robert Cave, a master baker who was leading the Dartford rebels. After marching around nearby villages recruiting his forces, Cave marched them to Maidstone to release John Ball from jail. It was here, in Maidstone that Wat Tyler, a man comparatively unknown until the last few days of his life, was placed at the head of the rising.

Tyler took his army to Canterbury where they searched the Palace of the Archbishop and destroyed all papers and rolls that recorded the peasants' bondage to their masters. At Canterbury Cathedral Tyler made a pronouncement from the pulpit stating that Archbishop Sudbury was condemned and would be put to death and it was intimated that John Ball should be appointed to the office.

Tyler's army returned to Maidstone, joined up with the main force, attacked and captured Rochester Castle

and marched on London. On Wednesday, June 12th, the peasant army pitched camp on Blackheath. From this camp parties were dispatched to release the prisoners from the King's Bench and Marshalsea prisons most of whom were offenders against the Statute of Labourers.

Inside the walls of the City of London the ruling class was in a panic. The king with some of his nobles went by barge to Rotherhithe where the Kent and Essex rebels were camped on opposite banks of the Thames. The royal party took fright and scampered back to London. The rebels then marched to London Bridge and to Aldgate, burning the Lord Mayor's brothels and destroying all the feudal documents that they could lay hands on.

Alderman Walter Sybylle, a fishmonger, was in charge of London Bridge, and threw it open to Tyler and his men, whilst Thomas Farrington opened the Ald Gate to the Essex men. The rebels had many such sympathisers amongst the merchants and workpeople of London who were themselves victims of the rapacious nobles. Many of them joined Tyler's forces when they entered the city and were punished for their part in the rising when it was suppressed.

The main body of rebels marched past the Gothic edifice of St. Paul's church, down the hill to Lud Gate and along the Strand to the Savoy Palace, the residence of the most hated man in England—John of Gaunt, the leader of the corrupt gang of noble speculators who were bleeding the people. The rebels maintained a strict discipline, executing selected enemies, destroying documents and property of their especial enemies, but stealing, taking or looting nothing. They encamped by the Tower of London which they eventually occupied.

The rebel army had a childish faith in the king, Richard II, a boy of 14 years of age. John Ball encouraged this faith, according to the quotation from Froissart that we have given. The king was regarded as a person of power who stood above all class antagonisms and enmities and who could be relied upon to be fair in his judgment of peoples wrongs and powerful enough to put them right. His nobles who surrounded him were an evil influence. If he could be spoken to and told of the rebels troubles, they were sure that he would remedy them. This faith proved the undoing of the rebellion.

The Earl of Salisbury, a mature statesman, concocted a plan to destroy the rebel army. Leaving Archbishop Sudbury of Canterbury, who was also Chancellor, Robert Halles, known as Hob the Robber, who was Treasurer, John Legge and the king's confessor, Appledore, to be tried and beheaded by the rebels in the Tower, the king and his other nobles rode out through Ald Gate to the fields at Mile End. Here he made promises to the assembled rebel forces.

In the house of John Farrington in London the rebel leaders had drawn up their demands which they now placed before the king. To the men of Hertford he promised:

"Know that of our special grace we have manumitted all our liege and singular subjects and others of the county of Hertford, freed each and all of their old bondage, and made them quit by these presents; pardoned them of all felonies, treasons, transgressions, and extortions committed by any and all of them, and assure them of our 'summa

nax'." ("English Rising of 1381." Fagan and Hilton. Page 130.) Similar charters were granted to other sections of the rebels. This satisfied many of them and, as Salisbury had anticipated, large numbers drew off and returned, delighted, to their native villages.

A reduced army under Tyler remained and continued to dig out and execute the particular enemies that they had listed. Those peasants who returned home spread the news of their great success and hosts of other risings occurred all over the country. John Farrington with Alderman John Horn and other members of various London Guilds did a bit of cleaning up in the city on their own account, executing some of their class enemies and straightening out a number of social injustices.

It was necessary to disperse the remainder of the rebel forces. The king again met the peasants at Smithfield and the nobles managed to separate Tyler from his men, surround him and, under cover of dusk, to strike him almost to death, without his followers realising what was happening. The rebels were told to go to St. John's Fields where a beknighted Wat Tyler would be returned to them. At the rendezvous the rebels were met by a strong military force that Mayor Walworth had raised and they were easily beaten and dispersed. Farrington and Horn tried to raise support for the peasants within the city but most of the erstwhile supporters, having squared their own accounts were only too pleased to see the end of the rebel forces.

Needless to say, the king's promises were never kept, but a hunt for rebels was conducted throughout the main areas of disaffection and cruel punishments

inflicted. The rising was probably a contributory factor in the improved conditions of the peasantry during the following century but the main factor was the change in the economic forces within feudalism.

Many workers today have the same faith in the capitalist state as the 1381 rebels had in their king. They regard the state as an independent organ, detached from class interests, acting as a mediating force in the struggles between employers and employed. Just as the feudal king was a member of the exploiting class of his day with the same interests to uphold, so the capitalist state of today is representative of capitalist class interests and uses its forces to maintain the capitalist system and protect the property of capitalists. Like the feudal state machinery, the capitalist counterpart will always be used to subdue rebellious workers.

Books to read:

- An Economic History of England, by Charlotte M. Waters.
- Six Centuries of Work and Wages, by James E. Thorold Rogers, M.P.
- The English Rising of 1381, by H. Fagan and R. H. Hilton.
- The Black Death, by G. G. Coulton.
- The Revolutionary Tradition in England, by F. A. Ridley.
- A Peoples History of England, by A. L. Morton.
- Chronicles of France, England and Spain, by Froissart (English Version in Everyman Library).
- Survey of London, by John Stow (also in Everyman Library).
- Dream of John Ball, by William Morris.

W. WATERS.

SOCIALISM AND SHARING OUT

Lord Amwell writes again in criticism of an article in the December, 1953, issue and our reply to his letter in the January issue.

London, W.1.
10th January, 1954.

The Editor,
The Socialist Standard.

Dear Sir,

Your reply to me is no answer. If you did not mean to imply that monetary distribution, called the "Redistribution of National Income," was a possible and valid socialist objective what was your argument about?

Figures such as those you have quoted are, in my contention, irrelevant and misleading because they are based on calculations made for particular purposes such as inland revenue estimates. If I were to reckon a pound transferred to a bookmaker's pocket from mine as two pounds for no better reason than ownership sequence I should be doing precisely what "cake" merchants of the old Fabian firm are still doing.

I fail to see that you do anything else when you suggest (as you do or I'm daft) that workers are poor because bosses roll in money and would not be poor if they had the money to roll in themselves. In a world where, as you claim, scientific industry could produce

more than the human race would be able to consume it cannot be consumption even on the part of a few idlers that is the real cause of poverty.

As to wages, you ignore my question. If social reform can be left to the technical advance of capitalism as in the factory acts, education acts, and the abolition of sweated industries concurrently with the invasion of mechanism, therefore if social reform is no business of a socialist, by what form of logical reasoning are wages and wage-mongering given a different category? Does the S.P.G.B., of all bodies argue that in its fifty years of existence the workers have taken more out of the capitalist by industrial pressure than the politicians by "reforms"? What, when, where? High-powered machine capitalism does not make profit out of squalor, disease, and fatigue. With trades union co-operation it adjusts the "fodder basis" to needs commensurate with a scientific age.

You seem to be surprised at my saying that inflationary wage increases are obtained at the expense of other sections of the working-class. Of course, if you maintain that operative labour alone counts and that only in key industries where organisation of a high order is possible the case must be left there. But look, if so, to your next bye-election address.

"Fancy" wages (I do not use the term in a derogatory sense) do not come out of otherwise fancy

profits. Bank interest levels and a grotesquely swollen fiduciary issue tell another story. The fiduciary issue, now close upon two-thousand-millions, reflects inflationary expenditure, and if you ask me why the market is not "priced" the same high wages or low that is my answer.

Manufacturers and traders use the printing press to pass the buck. The process is automatic. But millions of the working class suffer. Of old people alone, in my old borough of Islington (one twenty-eighth part of London) there are reported to be over 20,000 on the verge of destitution, saved only by public assistance under a means test more demoralising than ever penalised miners or dockers. Adjustments may be necessary even in the best disciplined trades, so I don't whine, but don't tell me that because my income is slashed in half compared with pre-war (never mind pre-1913) I do not belong to the working-class. I have worked harder than any of you and have to go on working at 77 for a bare living. I pay every increase in coal, transport, and (indirectly) steel and other basic wages and have no redress. Is it seriously contended that strikes are against capitalists and not against the community at this time of day? Does anyone believe that predatory pockets are picked or that capitalism could last a day longer as a going concern if it couldn't pass that buck.

No, Sir; just as the workers pay for their own welfare state, so they pay their own wages. Redistribution (wages or doles) is that of working-class income.

Yours faithfully,

AMWELL.

REPLY

Lord Amwell returns to his contention that the article he criticises implied support for a policy of redistributing the national income. As we have already pointed out the article did not do anything of the kind. What it set out to do was to show that the picture of capitalism given by the *Daily Mirror* was one quite out of harmony with the facts. It did not, either directly or by implication, suggest that the way out for the workers is to redistribute national income within the framework of capitalist society. On the contrary it ended with a re-iteration of the consistently held case of the S.P.G.B. that "there is no future for humanity within the framework of modern society."

When Lord Amwell challenges the figures showing concentration of ownership in the hands of a small wealthy minority, on the ground that these figures are based on calculations made for inland revenue purposes he is, by implication, denying a fact that in general terms is within the knowledge of everyone. Let him for the moment forget the money terms in which the estimates are necessarily expressed and face the fact that the physical embodiment of accumulated wealth, the factories and their products, and the land, buildings and transport systems, etc., are directly or through share and bondholding owned collectively by the rich minority who are thereby able to draw incomes derived from their property ownership. This is a fact of capitalism not an inland revenue abstraction.

The basic foundation of capitalism is that the means of production and distribution are owned by the capitalist class; the inequality in the distribution of

the national income flows from it. Socialists (including the writer of the criticised article) aim to convert the former, that is the land, factories, etc., into common ownership by the whole community; they are not and never were aiming to keep the capitalist bosses while seeking to diminish the inequality of distribution.

Lord Amwell asks if it is logical for the S.P.G.B. to regard "wage-mongering" differently from advocating social reform. If at the back of his question is the assumption that both can be left to capitalists and governments, this attitude contains within it a quite erroneous notion of the working of capitalism, which is certainly not guided by a sort of self-interested paternalism of capitalists. In fact it is not true that wage-levels can be left to our rulers and the class they represent. If the workers made no effort to resist, wage levels and the workers standard of living would fall. Employers know that their profits would increase with a fall of wages. At the time of writing the engineering and electrical employers are stoutly resisting claims for wage increases. They are not, as Lord Amwell's theory would presumably require of them, voluntarily offering to adjust wages upwards to suit "the technical advance of capitalism." And may we particularly draw attention to the characteristic capitalist view of social reforms. The engineering employers' federation in their clashes with the workers use the reforms introduced by the Government (i.e. the Health Service and National Insurance) as a reason why wages should not be increased. (See for example the employers report of their reply to the workers claim in November, 1951, published by the employers' federation.) In effect they argue that these social reforms, by taking care of certain items of working class expenditure make it possible for the workers to accept lower wages. In doing this they are only following the example set by the late Sir Stafford Cripps who likewise brought the same social reforms into his argument for "wage restraint."

We had asked Lord Amwell to explain his view that some wage increases are obtained at the expense of other workers. His explanation now is that wage increases are accompanied by inflation and consequent higher prices and that the latter penalise old age pensioners and others whose income is not correspondingly increased. Lord Amwell explains higher prices in terms of the "grossly swollen fiduciary issue." The point that is relevant here is that the major cause of the present level of prices being three of four times what it was in 1914 is not the actions of the workers nor even of the employers as such but has been brought about directly by the action of governments, as for example in the devaluation of the dollar before the second world war and the devaluation of the pound at various dates including that in 1949 by the Labour Government.

The prices have risen, mainly due to that cause, and organised workers have responded by claiming higher wages. It is true that some groups have been less able to secure increases of their wages or pensions but that is just one of the evils of capitalism.

Incidentally Lord Amwell's argument on this aspect makes nonsense of his other argument which suggests that the workers could well leave all the

necessary adjustments to the self-interest of employers and the social reforming activities of governments.

In conclusion we would repeat that the S.P.G.B. stands for the inauguration of Socialism which alone

will end capitalism's stranglehold on production, waste of resources and minority ownership of the means of production and distribution, with all the evils that flow therefrom.

ED. COMM.

THE STORY OF ALBERT

THIS is the true story of Albert, who after many years of patient and steady work bought a motor-car. How happy they were the day it arrived home. There it was outside the door, the magic carpet to happiness.

Nor more queuing at dirty, noisy railway stations, let the conductor bawl "No standing inside!" as loudly as he liked. Albert's wife and two daughters were so excited they could hardly eat, so the car was saving money already, just like the salesman said.

Not only that; it was there at the door advertising Albert's prosperity and success. Let 'em all take a good look, especially that stinking little snob of an insurance agent opposite! Ha! ha! he still did his rounds on a push-bike, the poor twerp!

Albert was no gilded parasite. He'd started at the bottom and come up the hard way! A boy in a fruit warehouse at twelve bob a week and his tea. That was twenty-six years ago. Only had two jobs all his life. As solid as a rock. In twenty-six years he'd risen from errand-boy to chief salesman, earning twelve pounds a week, not twelve shillings, and bonuses of anything up to £150 a year on sales.

What *had* those Socialist cranks been saying round Lincoln's Inn? Two classes in society or something! One lot who did all the work because they had nothing; and the others who had it all and therefore did nothing!

What tripe! Look at him, got where he was by hard work, hadn't he? Hadn't done him any harm, had it? Buying a house, and now his OWN car. How *could* they say that workers don't own anything?

He could have had a car before the war if he'd liked, when they were cheaper, but a man who has spent his whole working life almost, in one job, is cautious and very careful. And so our Albert, "quite rightly, when all's said and done" lived strictly within his means and refused to be tempted.

Now, it was a piece of cake. He was still very careful. It was only a second-hand car and not a very big one. Just an ordinary comfortable reliable family saloon. It was reliable enough. It broke down most reliably nearly every time Albert essayed the pleasures of the open road. Small things, at first, only details, but every time it came back some new fault developed till major complications set in. Garage bills came thick and fast, like Good King Wenceslas' snow "deep and crisp and even."

At last Albert was in it, his small bank account was swallowed up, he was at his wits' end.

What *would* the neighbours say? To keep up with the car, Albert fiddled the books. For six whole days he reigned, until the auditors caught up with him.

He had embezzled (Oh! Albert!) nine pounds. At Bow-Street Albert took his place on the seat worn smooth by an endless line of sinners, to plead guilty to three charges.

"Magistrate was quite nice about it." "Are you sure that this has not been going on for more than six days?" he asked the detective.

"Quite sure, Sir," was the reply.

"Has he lost his job?" "Yes Sir."

"People who betray their trust usually go to prison," said his worship. "Your good character stands you in good stead, there will be a fine of £5 on each of the three charges."

Albert asked for time to pay. Perhaps he could sell the car, although this was not so easy now, to pay the fines.

He has managed to get another job. Lucky to get it, really. After all, as his new guv'nor said, he couldn't expect very much more under the circumstances, starting at the bottom again, at forty-six.

Of course, he'd have to sell up the house. Couldn't keep up mortgage repayments on those wages, apart from the fact that the Building Society had turned nasty. Houses weren't fetching quite so much now, either.

This is almost the end of our story.

Today, standing in the bus queue Albert no doubt muses betimes upon the perplexities and paradoxes of our modern age.

His brief, though disastrous, incursions into the realm of property ownership have taught him nothing more than a greater respect for auditors.

HORATIO.

Debate on World Government

A public debate will be held on
Sunday, 7th February at 7.30 p.m.

at

ILFORD TOWN HALL (Lambourne Room)

"SHOULD SOCIALISTS SUPPORT WORLD GOVERNMENT"

FOR S.P.G.B. H. YOUNG

FOR "Crusade on World Government"

JOHN FITZGERALD, J.P., C.C.

ROMFORD GROUP

A discussion and study group is being formed in the Romford area. Those wishing to participate in the activities of this group should contact:—C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster, Essex.

Will anybody interested in forming groups or seeking any other information about groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office (52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4).

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Although it may appear to be an early reminder, it is well to have in mind that the Annual Conference takes place at Conway Hall at Easter (April 16th, 17th, 18th).

Delegates requiring accommodation should through their branches contact the Central Organiser. An important factor of course is that Branches should see that the Standing Orders Committee has all the relevant information necessary in good time before the Conference. The Social and Dance, will as usual be held on the Saturday (April 17th).

Socialist Standard. The beginning of the year is as good a time as any to see that subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD are paid up, it helps the members at Head Office and assures regular delivery each month. Annual Subscription, Post Free, 5s. 6d., Six months—2s. 9d.

Readers in the Paddington District are invited to visit the Paddington Branch room on Wednesday, February 17th. This is a special meeting for sympathisers and those who have seen the SOCIALIST STANDARD and want to know more about us.

We particularly invite the people with whom we made contact during the recent by-election campaign. Members of Paddington Branch are calling round to all the people who showed interest in the Socialist Party, but this is a long job, and we may not have been able yet to give YOU a call. If so, here is a splendid opportunity to get to know more about the case for Socialism in the friendly and informal atmosphere of a small meeting. The room is a large and comfortable one above the Portman Arms, 422, Edgware Road (a few minutes from the Metropolitan Theatre).

Come along and hear more about our policy—ask questions if you like, or tell us your point of view. But in any case we hope to see you on February 17th.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD may be obtained from the following newsagents in Paddington:

R. Harris, 264a, Edgware Road.
G. R. Hill, 476, Harrow Road.
P. H. Payne, 746, Harrow Road.

GLASGOW CITY AND KELVINGROVE MEETINGS

At Central Halls (Bath Street), Glasgow.

Sunday, Feb. 7th—
"Why Reforms Fail"—J. Richmond.
Sunday, Feb. 21st—
"Problems of Employment"—D. Webster.
At 7.30 p.m.

ISLINGTON BRANCH DISCUSSION
at Co-op. Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7.

Thursday, Feb. 4th, at 8 p.m.—
"Socialism and Leadership"—J. Rowan.
Thursday, Feb. 18th, at 8 p.m.—
"Progress in Propaganda"—J. Lestor.

SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES
At Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.
Commencing at 7 p.m. each Sunday.

BLOOMSBURY BRANCH DISCUSSION
at Conway Hall (North Room).
Thursday, Feb. 18th, at 8.30—
"Old Young's Almanac 1954"—H. Young.

CROYDON BRANCH
The following lectures will be given at 8 p.m. at Ruskin House, Wellesley Road, Croydon (near West Croydon Station), on Wednesdays:—
Feb. 10th—"Tory Tactics"—T. Lord.
" 24th—"Imperialism"—H. Jarvis.
Mar. 10th—"The Nature of the Socialist Revolution"—J. Trotman.

ISLINGTON PUBLIC MEETING
at Islington Central Library, 68, Holloway Road, N.7,
on Wednesday, February 24th, at 8 p.m.
"Is there an Alternative to Socialism?"—E. Hardy.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN FEBRUARY
Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.
Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 7.30 p.m.
Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.
Hyde Park, 6 p.m.
Sundays: White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11.30 a.m.
East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.
Hyde Park, 3 p.m.
Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.
Mondays: Finsbury Square.
Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
Exmouth Market.
Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.
Thursdays: Tower Hill.
Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES
SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.
SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire.
SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.
WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7626 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 8rd and 17th February, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 85, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 57, Fareham Avenue, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets alternate Thursdays from 14th January, at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd. (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmer's Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottle, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton Gower, Swansea.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to D. Deutz, 21, Kenilworth Gardens, Seven Kings, Essex.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. "Franchise," Rawreth Lane, Rawreth, Shot. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Baronsfold Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. 1st and 3rd Thursdays (4th and 18th February) Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. C. Langston, 99, Rommany Road, West Norwood, S.E.27.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Robin House, Wellesley Rd. (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Fulham meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gasbell Road, Epsom. Secretary, F. Lea. Fulham meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6. (Nr. Parsons Green Sta.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 435, Fulham Road, Chelsea, S.W.10.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 1st and 15th February, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197 Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Iveney, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7-9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. B. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. C. Rowan, 39, Ellington Street, Barnsbury, N.7.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec. 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. 9, Vicarage Rd, Kingston (opp. Bentalls).

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Runby Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 9h and 23rd Feb., George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breasey, 2, Denison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Welling-ton Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 595 Vol. 50 March, 1954

THE ELECTRICAL WORKERS' STRIKES

THE PASSING SHOW

WHAT IS RELIGION?

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY (English Naval Mutinies 1797)

THE MALADY LINGERS ON

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4

Unity with the I.L.P.

We have received from the I.L.P. the unity proposals set out in the letter published below. We publish also the reply sent to the I.L.P. by our Executive Committee, which explains our attitude to such proposals.

Socialist Party of Great Britain,
52 Clapham High Street,
S.W.4.

7th January, 1954.

Dear Comrades,

I have been instructed by the National Council of the I.L.P. to give you below copy of a Resolution which was passed at our last Conference:—

NEED FOR A UNITED SOCIALIST PARTY

"Conference realises that it would be folly to allow individuals who know little or nothing about socialist theories and ideas to vote on the formation of socialist policy, and therefore we admit to membership of our party only people who realise the need for the abolition of Capitalism and the establishment of a Socialist Commonwealth.

"It is not surprising to us that well-meaning socialists who are members of the political section of the Labour Party are continually frustrated (as they are bound to be) when their ideas and resolutions are voted down with soul-destroying monotony at every annual conference by the insensate block vote. The block votes are cast in the names of millions of people who are in most cases never consulted.

"It is not incumbent on the Trade Union leaders who wield the block votes to be socialists, and it is obvious that very few of them are.

"We appeal to active socialists and to those who have dropped out in despair, and also to young socialists who have not yet attached themselves to any party, to join with us in the I.L.P., where every member has a voice in matters of policy, and whose conferences are democratic and uninfluenced by outside block votes. The need for socialism is now so great that the I.L.P. appeals for closer united effort with all other parties or groups which agree with the essential socialistic fundamentals for which we stand. If any possibility arises of a united socialist party based on those fundamentals, no considerations of prestige or sentiment should stand in the way of its formation."

I should be very much obliged if you would kindly give this matter your friendly consideration and let me know at your convenience whether

you will be prepared to join with us in an attempt to bring together the socialist forces in the country for a closer united effort as mentioned in this resolution.

Looking forward to the pleasure of your reply,

Yours fraternally,

JOHN McNAIR.

* * *

REPLY

Mr. John McNair,
General and Political Secretary,
I.L.P.

Dear Mr. McNair,

We thank you for your letter of 7th January in which, on the instruction of your National Council, you forward the resolution on the "need for a United Socialist Party" passed by your last conference. The resolution looks to the possibility of forming a united socialist party and your letter asks if the S.P.G.B. is prepared to join with the I.L.P. "in an attempt to bring together the socialist forces in the country for a closer united effort as mentioned in the resolution."

Before dealing with other issues raised by the resolution we should explain that the S.P.G.B. has always been unreservedly in favour of common action with parties and groups that are socialist; as for example, in our relations with overseas bodies based on the same principles as the S.P.G.B. On the other hand we are explicitly bound by our constitution to oppose parties whose activities do not promote working class emancipation, that is to say, parties that are not socialist.

It is in the light of this that we must consider your proposal that the S.P.G.B. should unite with the I.L.P., and with other parties and groups based on the same fundamentals as the I.L.P.

In effect therefore the S.P.G.B. regards its own declaration of Principles (a copy of which is enclosed) as the sound basis for socialist organization while the I.L.P. resolution invites the S.P.G.B. to unite with the I.L.P. and with other parties or groups on the basis of the I.L.P.'s "essential socialist fundamentals."

In view of the widespread misuse of the term socialist to mean reforms of capitalism and measures to extend State capitalism or nationalisation it is of course necessary to be clear about the I.L.P.'s present proposal to make "socialist fundamentals" the basis of unity. Your letter does not touch on this but the resolution does so itself in the earlier and longer section dealing with the Labour Party.

The resolution condemns the domination of Labour Party conferences by the block vote of the trade unions on the ground that the block votes are wielded by trade union leaders very few of whom are socialists, and that because of this (to quote the terms of your resolution), "well-meaning socialists who are members of the political section of the Labour Party are continually frustrated . . . when their ideas and resolutions are voted down with soul-destroying monotony." Your resolution goes on to appeal to them to join the I.L.P. in which there is no block vote to hamper them.

We agree of course that the idea of achieving

socialism by tagging the label socialist to a body largely made up of affiliated unions and wholly composed of social reformers is as absurd now as it was when pointed out by the S.P.G.B. in the infancy of the Labour Party; but we cannot agree that the non trade union elements in the Labour Party stand for socialism. The readily available evidence proves this to be quite untrue.

On this we would refer you to the Labour Party document setting out the several hundred resolutions placed on the agenda for the Labour Party Conference 1953. The overwhelming majority of these were submitted not by trade unions but by local Labour Parties, i.e. by those referred to in your resolution as the "well-meaning socialists" whose resolutions are voted down. In vain we search among these resolutions for indication of socialist ideas.

The point can be illustrated from the 30 resolutions on nationalisation only two of which were submitted by trade unions, the rest coming from local Labour Parties. As a body these 28 resolutions assume the continuation of the wages system, of property incomes, of production for sale and profit—in short the continuation of capitalism, modified only by some extension of nationalisation or State capitalism. Not one of them opposes Nationalisation along with private capitalism. Not one of them envisages the emancipation of the working class by the abolition of capitalism. Not one of them could be supported by "socialists" unless the term is again misused to mean social reformers and advocates of State capitalism.

We are therefore left with the impression that the aim of the I.L.P. resolution is to secure some re-alignment of social reformist groups in this country on a basis that would be acceptable to many of the Local Labour Parties whose only complaint is that their efforts to secure Labour Party Conference support for their reform measures are blanketed by the trade union vote. This is of course not a basis for unity for socialists.

If your National Council has in mind any particular statement of I.L.P. principles that in the terms of the resolution it would consider appropriate for the proposed united body perhaps you would provide us with a copy.

At the same time we would ask your National Council to state what is their attitude towards our view that the S.P.G.B.'s Declaration of Principles is the sound basis for socialist organisation.

Yours for Socialism,

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,

S.P.G.B.

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SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

At Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Commencing at 7 p.m. each Sunday.

A LETTER FROM AUSTRIA

WITH a quarter of a million unemployed, and the other insoluble problem of the ever increasing masses of youths without occupation and without a chance in life, the Austrian S.P.'s insistent cry is "Arbeitsbeschaffung," in addition to the usual programme of reforms. Well may you ask yourself what has become of all that recent talk of "full employment"—they are glad now if they can prevent further colossal increases of unemployment. They know that a further deterioration of conditions means still greater dissatisfaction and apathy towards their politics. The rank and file must feel that all efforts at improvement are unavailing and nothing but make-shifts. On the other hand, the appalling situation in the world generally, which has its repercussions in every corner of this occupied land, also makes all utterances by statesmen and politicians look so much childish prattle. The uneasiness and discontent among the rank and file was the subject of a leading article in the "Wiener Montag" which wrote after the last S.P. conference: "It ended with fine music and songs, and nothing reflected the discordance and disappointment among the masses of members, the nameless small infantrymen of the party with whom alone something of the old social democratic ideal can still be found."

"The 460 delegates who ran the Party conference, were anxious to present a bright and impressive tableau of perfect unity. They are all more or less—whether as ministers or small clerk of any provincial co-operative store—in permanent employment of the party, and as such economically dependent on the mighty ones of the S.P. For that reason, a genuine opposition against measures of the party bosses was out of the question. Anyone who would have dared to make a deep-going criticism and give expression to the true feeling of the people knew that this would mean the loss of his livelihood. Endeavours are made, besides, to stiffen party discipline which one can only describe as undemocratic or even dictatorial. The small members feel that socialism has developed into a private matter of those who have achieved success and power in the party and through the party and mean to maintain it. Thus it is that there is so much discontent and misgiving outside the official acclamations."

If then nothing stirs here in Austria in real opposition to the pseudo-socialist and communist parties, it might, on the other hand, be explained by pointing to the terrifying experiences of people simply disappearing behind the iron curtain, and making critics wary and nervous to expose themselves to the claws of the diabolical ghouls of the secret police, aided as they are even by local communist party members. And in fact, past and present experience IS terrifying. Only this month, a Vienna daily paper brought a list of 94 Austrians of whose disappearance behind the iron curtain nothing had so far even been known to the authorities here. About 30 of them have been condemned to 25 years forced labour, the rest to 15 and 10 years respectively. 700 Austrian civilians have long been known to be confined in the "workers' paradise,"

some of whom have been granted the special privilege of writing home one postcard per month. Others are still barred from even such communication "facilities" with their families!

But if things like these would account for the lack of greater stirrings for socialism in spite of the bankruptcy and impotence of the labour movement in face of the spectre of another war, what is one to say for similar apathy in other parts of the world where this murderous persecuting machinery does not exist? I think it is well, especially in the year of the 50th anniversary of the S.P.G.B., to broach this question. For my part, I am still confident that after half a century of futile reformism, the tide will soon turn and the workers get a move on on the right track, the track that has been consistently pointed out by you in all that time. Now that the avowed capitalist parties would seem to have learned to appreciate the value of reforms (for the masters) and more and more do the reformist work themselves, the labour frauds seem to become even more embarrassed to justify their existence. As a case in point, the avowed Austrian capitalist party (Volkspartei) which governs in coalition with the S.P., wrote the other day that since their policy "had proved to be to the advantage of all sections of the community, and since they were carrying the burden of responsibility, the question arose what need there was for sharing the government with the S.P." You can imagine how this stung the S.P.—job hunters. They who had worked so hard to get jobs and done their level best to keep on good terms with the Volkspartei, should now be ousted and lose those jobs?

In a leading article, "Let us speak plainly," the *Arbeiter Zeitung* promptly and bitterly complained about such "ingratitude" after working so "harmoniously and successfully together." The quarter million unemployed poor and the great increase of wealth of the small clique of unemployed rich are probably to illustrate the success of the two parties' harmonious co-operation. How harmonious and successfully they work together is also shown by the "socialist" Vice-chancellor's and other S.P. bosses' frequent visits to and hobnobbing with all the big ones of the earth in London, Washington and Paris.

As if to prove me wrong when saying that all was quiet on the continental socialist front, I just found—tucked away in a Trade Union paper (*Gewerkschaftliche Rundschau*) one solitary confession, or shall we say self-criticism, about the "Attitude of the Labour movement," which perhaps deserves attention.

After stating that "the labour movement in the European countries form the CONSERVATIVE ELEMENT in the development of European organisations," the writer says it has been clearly demonstrated in the post-war years, how the policy of the labour parties and the Trade Unions in the various countries—whether inside the government or outside of it—is directed to the maintenance of a national sovereignty worn threadbare or lost through military defeats. "It cannot be disputed," the writer says, "that the modern

labour movement has become the last standard-bearer of NATIONALISM. Anyone reading their newspapers or periodicals, the speeches of their leading functionaries, and their programmes, will always notice with amazement their efforts to prove that they are the best part of the nation, the standard-bearer of the NATIONAL TRADITION. And it would be idle to point a finger at one of the countries as the culprit. There is very little difference between us—the difference is one of degrees only.” The writer continues: “It is surely remarkable that those bourgeois circles who in former years reproached the labour movement for their inter-nationalism, are today aiming at a greater, a super-national community. But it is surely no less remarkable that the former carriers of the international idea (who were often insulted for this attitude) now remember their internationalism only on festive occasions and at international conferences, while in everyday life they act almost exclusively on a NATIONAL basis.”

As if to fear strictures, the writer almost apologizes for such frankness and says: “I make no reproaches. My concern is to state the facts. Besides, I know the international labour movement, to which I pride myself to belong, too well to try to explain these facts as being due to maliciousness of certain leaders. However, the fact remains. To the watchword of the International ‘Workers of all countries Unite’ has been added: ‘do it within national communities, fight there for your rights—afterwards the co-ordination of these nationally organized communities will SOMEHOW be effected within an international forum.’

“Dangerous precipices”

“One day they will find that the sum total of these national socialisms does not at all mean international socialism. On the contrary, there are examples (in the post-war time) showing that the national socialism of one country destroys the possibility of development of the working class movement in another. It should give us cause to think that the very State with the greatest State-omnipotence—the Soviet Union—is today the warmest advocate of that unrestricted sovereignty which condemns our split-up Continent to hopelessness and impotence. We should learn from history that in their nationally developed economies the class-bound bourgeois world heads for mutual destruction, whereby the workers have the doubtful pleasure of marching behind banners and sacrificing life where PROFITS are concerned.”

After stating that “just as one hundred years ago Marx analyzed the bourgeois society of his day, the labour movement which then originated, should now, after 100 years of its existence, be subjected to a critical survey.” “It is a tragedy,” he says, “that the direction of the labour movement has gone the way opposite to its original aim. It is more concerned with the national aspirations of peoples across the frontiers than with the private ownership of the means of life in their own country and in the world at large. In the meantime, many of these aspirations and reforms have been realized, but in the process the socialist objective has been lost sight of. In other words, the price paid for labour’s ‘achievements’ has been too high—it is the

price of the change of policy from internationalism to nationalism.” Finally, the writer says: “This is by no means an unreal spectre! In the programmes of the European socialist parties and in plans of these parties and of the Trade Unions you will often find that national economies are not directed with a view to a greater community co-operating harmoniously, but that the national economy has PRIORITY, and is marked as a fight against the neighbours. There are programmes of socialist parties which express this explicitly and point by point. First is the *nation* and the *national solution* of economic questions.”

Whether this will remain an isolated criticism coming from within the labour parties, or be followed up and produce some reaction in these quarters, remains to be seen. It is true that the passages quoted are from an article contributed to the *Gewerkschaftliche Rundschau* not by an Austrian labour-man but by a labourite from Amsterdam.

Some time ago, I received a copy of the *Manchester Guardian*, containing a brief review of a book “In the Twilight of Socialism—a history of the Revolutionary Socialists of Austria.” There is no lack of books on Austrian politics, past and present, but one wonders who reads them, even if their prices were within the reach of working class purses. There is the former Austrian foreign minister’s book containing the indiscretions about the former chancellor Figl’s (now foreign minister) confidential talks with the Vienna Communist leaders (an indiscretion that got Dr. Gruber the sack), and then there are the numerous books by the late Dr. Karl Renner. If they are unaffordable for the workers, so much the better, says an impatient friend of mine, because a man who has described Soviet Russia and the British Empire as socialist, cannot be a teacher of the working class—he can only add to their confusion. And really, with all these “great socialist leaders,” *Arbeiter Zeitungen* a.s.o., the sorry fact remains that at least 95% of the members of the 600,000 strong S.P. treat you as a fantasist if you point out to them that Socialism means No classes, No buying and selling, No wages, No money. Such is the result of S.P. teaching over 60 years of their existence! No, the enlightenment of the workers will never come from these leaders, it has to come from the works of Marx and Engels and through the hard work of parties based on the rock of the Declaration of Principles of the S.P.G.B. and companion parties, and it will come no less from the glaring bankruptcy of labourism and the pitiless lessons taught by capitalism itself. We hold with Marx that the capitalists are digging their own grave. Could it be that efforts soon to be made to exclude the use of atom-bombs from the capitalist armoury for the next wars are prompted by this fear of their early grave?

It seems to me that in any discussion or debate about the value of labour leaders to the working class, it should be asked how anyone serving and paid by the capitalist State in such high and highest positions as President, Prime-Minister, Chancellor, etc., can consistently point to the existence of two classes in society, the property-owning and the propertyless section, that there is an irreconcilable antagonism of material interest between them, and that this is the cause of 95% of the

evils afflicting modern society. Of course, these paid hirelings of an exploiting State not only ignore these facts, but even do their utmost trying to explain them away or to refute them. And what worse service can these leaders render to the workers than to obscure the class struggle? This is where my friend’s impatience

comes in; he calls it doing the dirty work of the capitalists. And verily, whatever these “great socialists” may have written, their services as the State’s men in the capitalist stable would prove them to be enemies of the working class and of Socialism.

R.

THE PASSING SHOW

Clay Feet

During the war the newspapers resounded with praise of Mr. Churchill and our other war-leaders and generals. Seldom did any criticism appear of the conduct of the war by these almost god-like individuals. But now that the war is receding into the past, and the history of the fighting and the biographies of the leaders are being written, a different picture appears. For example, Mr. Gavin Long, the official war historian of Australia, has now produced his second volume, dealing inter alia with the campaign in Greece in 1941. The force sent consisted of two Australian and one New Zealand divisions, which had been under the command of General Blamey. According to Mr. Long, “Mr. Menzies, when in London in February, 1941, was informed by Whitehall that General Blamey had agreed to the Greek expedition, and General Blamey was simultaneously informed by Lord Wavell in Egypt that Mr. Menzies had agreed.” (*The Times*, 29-1-54; subsequent quotations are from the same source unless otherwise indicated.) In fact, neither Mr. Menzies nor General Blamey had agreed; the latter actually opposed the expedition on the ground that it was “extremely hazardous.” General Blamey was given to understand that 23 air squadrons would support this force; Mr. Menzies was told that 13 squadrons would be going; in fact, fewer even than 13 were sent. Such are the methods of modern war.

Dilatory decisions

Another volume recently appearing is the second volume of the official British history of the war, by Major L. F. Ellis. Now that no propaganda purposes demand the distortion of the truth, a little more frankness is forthcoming. It appears that in 1940, when Mr. Churchill had just taken over the Government, and he was being depicted to the British workers as an almost infallible war-leader, his interventions in the British campaign in France were not always so illustrious as we were given to believe. Major Ellis says that the Prime Minister’s telegrams and messages to Lord Gort, the commander-in-chief of the B.E.F., were “not always relevant.” Mr. Churchill “did not grasp the nature of the German threat to the B.E.F. as a whole, nor the weakness of the Belgian position” (25-1-54). As for Lord Gort, “he was a stickler for detail, and his grip on the battle was sometimes loose. Having unwisely dispatched his director of Military Intelligence to command a scratch force on his right flank, he was often short of battle information, and his own headquarters was not well-organised.” The author finds much to say in praise of Lord Gort, too; but some of the French

generals are painted in a very unfavourable light. General Weygand, for example, “consistently allowed himself to be overtaken by events.” “The loss of the 51st Division at St. Valery, fighting apart from the B.E.F., is directly attributable to one of his dilatory decisions.” General Billotte “moved slowly and gave few orders; there were days on end when Lord Gort heard nothing from him.” General Blanchard “had neither the overall knowledge, the personal authority, nor the power of decision that were needed at this desperate juncture.”

Better—for whom?

The position of the Socialist is clear. He does not quote these extracts in order to maintain that if better generals and leaders had been appointed, all would have been well. It is true that if the British and French generals had been more expert practitioners of the art of war, perhaps fewer British and French workers would have lost their lives; but on the other hand, if this had been the case, more German and Italian workers would have been sent to their graves. In both cases, the working-class as a whole loses. The real tragedy is not that this or that division was lost through some stupid blunder by the brass-hats; but that the working-class insists on maintaining a system of society which engenders such fierce antagonisms between various groups of property-owners that a periodic blood bath is inevitable. If there were no other reason for the establishment of Socialism—and there are many others—this facet of capitalism alone would justify its abolition.

Fighters for the right

But our Labour Party leaders are not concerned with abolishing capitalism and, along with it, war; they want to keep capitalism, and their chief concern about war seems to be that there shall be more up-to-date weapons for the workers to kill each other with. Mr. Churchill recently announced in the Commons that the new rifle with which the British Army is to be equipped is not one of British design, which had been recommended earlier; the new rifle finally adopted was designed in Belgium. The reason for this seems to be mainly that the U.S.A. is likely to adopt the Belgian rifle, whereas had the choice rested on the British rifle it is probable that the U.S.A. would not have adopted it, and therefore an increased measure of standardisation would not have been possible. This decision has aroused a storm of protest among Labour M.P.s. Mr. Woodrow Wyatt alleged that it was due to the Prime Minister not standing up to the Americans for something he knew to be “right” (20-1-54). What is

"right" about a machine designed for the single purpose of killing human beings? Presumably Mr. Wyatt knows, but if he does he has not told us. Mr. Shinwell took the opportunity to proclaim the superiority of inventions produced by the British capitalist system over those produced by foreign capitalism: he asked the Prime Minister "why this preference for foreign products?" (27-1-54). Mr. Attlee, ex-Major, rose indignantly and complained that the new rifle "has to have all sorts of bits and pieces put on it before you can even use the bayonet." Really, Mr. Attlee? Is this a disadvantage in your eyes? Many people would have thought that this was to be numbered among the rifle's good points.

Hobson's Choice

Mr. Churchill defended the rifle on the ground (among others) that "it has a butt. Remember that the butt is very important when you have no ammunition." (27-1-54.) This exchange in the Commons has had one effect, anyway. It has revealed a definite cleavage of opinion between the Labour and Conservative Parties. When you next wonder what major issue prevents the two parties admitting their basic similarity by amalgamating with each other, remember this important distinction. Mr. Attlee supports the "stick-it-in-his-guts-and-twist-it" school of army instructors; while Mr. Churchill prefers the "grip-the-barrel-and-bash-his-brains-out-with-the-butt" school. So if you insist on supporting a capitalist party, you can take your choice.

Advertising

One of the ways in which our society wastes the energies of its members, energies which under a civilised system—that is, Socialism—would go towards satisfying the needs of the community, is advertising. An advertising industry is an essential in a private-enterprise system, and even under state-capitalism (as the Russians have found out). But this malignant growth on the body politic does not show itself merely in advertising the competing products of manufacturers, one against the others; it does not stop there. The following forms of advertising may also be observed by anyone who studies the newspapers and the hoardings:

Advertising put out by advertising firms to encourage business men to come to them for their advertising campaigns.

Advertising put out by newspapers, hoarding-companies, railways and other concerns which "sell space" advertising themselves as being good for advertising.

Advertising put out by all the advertisement firms in a particular kind of business advertising their own particular advertising media; for example, poster firms issuing posters which advertise—posters.

But now the *Daily Express* has gone a stage farther. It has begun to buy space in other papers in order to advertise—advertising (e.g. 29-1-54). So it goes on. Waste begets waste, and a small army of office-staff, billposters and printers, using materials like paper and ink which could be put to good use, is kept busy operating a machine which is only necessary under capitalism.

We did it

Mr. Wilfred Burke, M.P. for Burnley and chairman of the Labour Party, gave a party political broadcast on Saturday, January 30th. He said "if the unions had used the bargaining power that the shortage of labour gave them in the five or six years after the war—as the employers had used their power in times of unemployment—they could have held the nation to ransom. But they did not do so. The Labour Government asked everybody to exercise restraint, and the workers responded because they knew that harder work and greater productivity would go to help the nation as a whole to reach independence and solvency." (*The Observer*, 31-1-54). What is this "nation" which the workers could have held to ransom? For if you take the workers away, what is left is not the "nation"; it is simply the capitalist class. Now it is unlikely that, given the continuance of the capitalist system, the workers will ever be able to hold the capitalist class to ransom; but the workers can, and indeed must, fight on the industrial field to safeguard, and if possible to improve, their living conditions. And it makes a strange boast from the chairman of the Labour Party, which claims to represent the workers, that it was a Labour Government which persuaded the workers not to do everything in their power to improve their living standards when they had the opportunity.

Rights of unionists: New defender

Democracy in the trade unions is in danger, says Sir Waldron Smithers; and he has appointed himself its defender. Recently he asked the Prime Minister "if he would introduce legislation which would make strikes illegal until such time as a secret ballot of the workers under Government auspices, had been taken" (20-1-54). Sir Waldron has here a principle which is unexceptionable; that the leaders of the union should act in conformity with the wishes of the unionists. But in the days of "unofficial strikes"—strikes which were "unofficial" for the sole reason that the men wanted them, while the leaders did not—there was no news of Sir Waldron asking for legislation which would force the leaders to follow the demands of the unionists, and distribute strike-pay to the strikers. Sir Waldron, like many other people who take their stand on apparently unexceptionable principles, gives himself away by his own inconsistency.

Unusual honesty department

From *The Observer* (20-12-53): "Tonga is probably the nearest approach in this atomic age to the novelist's fabled Pacific Utopia... There are no newspapers." Well, you said it.

JOSHUA.

**DON'T
FORGET**

DENISON HOUSE ★
"The Way We Live To-day"
Sunday, March 7th, 7 p.m.

WHAT IS RELIGION?—(continued)

The Bible

THE Bible is the most important book in the world if judged by its influence upon mankind. It is the source of all our knowledge of God, Christ, and the background of Christianity. Thousands of men have wasted their lives in reading and re-reading it, learning to recite parts of it, repeating it dozens of times and holding discussions on its thousands of meaningless phrases. True there are some good things in it but they are so mixed up with and adulterated by nonsense, that its net value to the human race, if judged on the whole, can only be to its detriment. It is because of the interpretation of some of its phrases that many men have been put to death by the cruellest means of being burnt alive, or starved to death in jails. Much blood has been shed over the interpretation of the scriptures.

The main argument against the Bible is that it certainly is not the word of God, or men inspired by God, and that it contains a host of stupid mistakes, useless ideas, and accounts which can only spread ignorance and confusion. Those who accept the Bible as the word of God or as their guide to life would do well to consider some of these examples.

In Genesis Ch. 1 we are told that animals were made before man, while in Ch. 2 we are told that man was made first and the animals afterwards. Both these accounts cannot be right. As Socialists we know that both are wrong for creation itself is a false theory, no matter which way round it was supposed to have gone.

That God, after making animals and man and peopling the earth with everything that was pleasant and nice, decided to destroy it all, is a peculiar act for an almighty God. Especially if we bear in mind that he knew everything in advance and therefore must have known that Adam and Eve would sin and the devil would triumph and he would have to drown the whole world and start again with Noah and his family. Why did he not start with Noah and Co. in the first place? Millions of innocent animals were sent to an untimely grave through no fault of their own, but by their own creator.

Noah was first told to put two of each animal in the Ark (Genesis Ch. 6 verse 19) and afterwards to put seven of each into the ark (Genesis Ch. 7 verse 2). How all these thousands of animals could be packed into a small boat does not need to be carefully analyzed. All the food needed for these animals and the enormous quantity of excreta deposited in the ark must have made things a little unpleasant for Noah and his family. Where all the rain came from—for it covered the Earth including Mt. Everest, and where all the water disappeared to is problem enough to bamboozle all the clerks of the weather that have ever existed.

We are told that David was a man after God's own heart, and he was in direct descent between Adam and Christ, yet this David (King David it was) amused himself climbing upon the roof of Uriah's house to watch Uriah's wife bathing. As Uriah was one of his soldiers the Bible tells us how David sent Uriah to fight in the hottest battle in order that he might get killed, while he, the great King David, carried on his interesting occupation undisturbed and committed adultery with

her. II Sam. Ch. XI verses 2-15. Not exactly the correct conduct for a man after God's own heart.

In the first book of Samuel Ch. 18 verse 27 is an account of David having killed 200 Philistines, cut off their foreskins and giving them to Saul in exchange for his daughter Michal for a wife.

The book of Ecclesiastes is said to have been written by an unbeliever because it "lets the cat out of the bag," in Ch. 9 verse 5 which states "the dead are dead, they know no more, neither will they have any reward!"

If it is objected to that the Old Testament is a little the worse for its age, let us look at the New Testament, for it contains the words of Christ, so it is alleged, although Jesus never wrote a word of it, nor did his disciples, who passed on to others his ideas by word of mouth and who succeeded admirably in getting the master's ideas all mixed up and confused, as he being the Son of God knew full well they would before he died. One would have thought that if the whole thing is of any importance to the world and to mankind for generations to come, at least Christ would have written his own ideas down crystal clear so that they did not cause any confusion. If God has spoken then why is it that the world is not convinced?

The sermon on the mount is the star sermon, the Gettysburg address of the Bible, the greatest of all sermons preached by the greatest of men, in fact preached by God himself disguised as a man. In this sermon we find the philosophy of Christ, so let us pause and look at it. Matt. Ch. 5 verse 29. "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off." Such self-mutilation or self-surgery is a relic of the barbarous past and nobody today would attempt to follow it, not even the divines. Verse 40 (same chapter) states, "If any man sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, give him thy cloke also." In other words, if any man sues you for £100, insist on paying £200. "Take no account for your life what yea shall eat, or what yea shall drink, or for your body what yea shall put on." Matt. Ch. 6 verse 25. Just try to carry this out in practice and tomorrow you will be in the workhouse, in prison, in hospital, or in debt.

Another real truth, direct from the mouth of Christ. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I come not to bring peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." (Matt. Ch. 10 verse 34.) Then if it was Christ's purpose to bring a sword and disturb the peace of the world, how much better would it have been for mankind if he had stayed away. If it was his avowed purpose to cause family quarrels, then mankind would have benefited by his absence. In one place he poses as the apostle of peace and good will, and in another place we find him declaring that his intentions were to disturb the peace. Can we from this conclude that the Bible is the word of God divinely inspired and suitable for man's guidance?

(Continued on page 41)

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to be Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

THE ELECTRICAL WORKERS' STRIKES

THE dispute between the Electrical Trade Union and the employers' National Federated Electrical Association over the wage claim for some 40,000 electrical contracting workers is now many months old. As long ago as October, 1953, it was the subject of official inquiry by a court appointed by the Ministry of Labour, the report of which recommended the two sides to resume negotiations on the National Joint Industrial Council. The Court dealt with and disposed of the employers' complaint that the strikes were politically inspired by the Communist officials of the E.T.U. *The Times* Labour Correspondent wrote:

"The court find no support in the evidence for the view that political rather than industrial objectives were being sought by the Union."—(*Times*, 15/10/1953.)

This has however not prevented some newspapers from continuing to treat the Union's campaign as merely a Communist political manoeuvre.

Another line of attack in certain newspapers has been that some of the strikes have been forced on unwilling members by the union's officials. This was based on what happened when one of the "guerilla" strikes took place at the new steel works at Scunthorpe. *The Daily Herald* (12/1/54) reported:—

"Strike instructions were issued by Mr. Frank Foulkes, Union President, who addressed a mass meeting of the men at which many voted against a stoppage of work. Some who attended the meeting, held in private, said the majority were in favour of continuing at work."

Mr. Foulkes is reported to have told a Press Conference that those who opposed the strike were men who had been "obliged to join my union when they came to work in Scunthorpe. They have not got the traditions of our organisation and industry." (*Daily Telegraph*, 21/1/54.)

According to the *Daily Telegraph* these men were

craftsmen's mates, formerly members of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, who were compelled to join the E.T.U. as "auxiliary members" when they came to work on the steel plant.

Here of course is one of the weaknesses of compulsory membership. Unwilling members can hamper a union just as much inside it as outside. Indeed if sufficiently numerous on any site they can prevent a vote in favour of a strike.

It is on the issue of how decisions to strike are taken that some question arises. In 1951 under the Union's existing rules some members obtained a High Court ruling that an order to strike was illegal because the rule requiring a prior ballot had not been carried out. If newspaper reports are correct the rules were subsequently amended so that the ballot is not now required. Long experience has shown that the workers can best safeguard their own interests if they keep in their own hands the decision to start and end the strikes in which they are concerned and do not hand over this power to Union officials.

In the present dispute however there is every evidence that the majority of the workers concerned are generally in favour of the strikes, despite the exceptional situation at Scunthorpe. Indeed although the *Daily Express* has made much of this issue its own correspondent Mr. Trevor Evans wrote as follows about the one day national strike on 18th January:

"There seems little doubt that Monday's one day strike will be generally observed. At many meetings held by electricians in the last four days there has been more enthusiasm for the national token strike than for the Guerilla strikes though, cumulatively, they involved more than 2,000 electricians."—(*Daily Express*, 15/1/54.)

The claim made by the Union was for a "substantial" wage increase, which has been interpreted in quarters friendly to the Union as 3d. an hour in London and 2½d. in the Provinces. The only offer made by the employers' federation is 1½d. an hour (excluding the South, South-East and South-West coastal counties which were to receive no increase) but with the condition that the overtime rate for the first six hours' overtime a week should be reduced from time and a half to time and a third. The overall effect of this would be an increase of about 1d. an hour, with less for men doing considerable overtime.

Two reasons have been given by the employers for excluding some areas from their offer of 1½d. an hour. One is that since the war these areas have received larger wage increases than elsewhere. The other is that in them "electrical contracting firms were having difficulty in finding work." (*Times* 7/1/54.)

The present journeyman electricians agreed rate in London is 4s. an hour for a 44 hour week, while the adult mate receives 3s. 4½d. At the last Ministry of Labour inquiry (April, 1953) average earnings of adult men in this industry were given as £9 4s. 4d. a week and their average hours of work just over 48. This earnings figure includes payment for the average of four hours overtime, as well as other payments above the standard wage.

The Union and the employers have both based their attitude on the cost of living figures. Mr. Walter Stevens, Secretary of the E.T.U. puts it that "increases in the cost of food, rent, fares and other essentials

underline the justice of our claim." (*Daily Worker*, 18/1/54). While the employers contend that wage rates have risen by a greater percentage than the cost of living. But it all depends on what date you start from. The E.T.U. plumps for 1948 while the employers want 1946. They do so because this will bring into account the increase of electricians' hourly rates when their hours were reduced from 47 to 44 at the end of 1947. The E.T.U. objects to this on the ground that that was not a wage claim.

It is of course all beside the point to a union striking for higher wages. If workers can take advantage of a relatively favourable situation to get ahead of the cost of living they should do so. When conditions become more unfavourable to the workers they will find that employers and the Government won't worry much about what the cost of living index says.

On the other hand if a Union is pinning its hopes not on strike action but simply on arbitration it has to make do with arguments about prices and wages which may influence the court.

Each side has accused the other of refusing to go to arbitration. In the past the employers have refused but now, anticipating that their offer might be endorsed by an Arbitration Tribunal, they invite arbitration. The Union, rejecting this, has offered either to take an unconditional 1½d. an hour if the employers will then negotiate on the rest of the claim, or alternatively if the

employers will offer more than 1½d. the Union will go to arbitration on the balance. (*Manchester Guardian*, 7/1/54).

In the meantime the workers prospects seem fairly good. Some employers have individually granted increased pay (4d. an hour in some cases, *News Chronicle* 23/1/54), and the *Times* has reported that the Federated employers have reason to be worried about the strikes:

"With the employers it is not so much the direct expense which causes anxiety as doubt about the patience of the chief contractors and building owners whose programme of work is being held up by the domestic troubles of the electrical contracting industry. It is believed that the building employers' federation have appealed to members not to embarrass the electrical contractors by pressing them at this stage.

"Nevertheless, the time may come when some owners and big building and civil engineering firms may begin to look round for contractors who are not affected by the strike—the contracting departments of the nationalised electricity boards are a possibility—to complete long delayed installations."—(*Times*, 29/1/54.)

The question whether the E.T.U.'s tactics of guerilla strikes is the best for the existing situation is one of which the electricians themselves are the best judges. There is however evidence in the past history of struggles in various countries that such strikes can sometimes be effective.

We of course wish the electricians success in their struggle for higher pay.

What is Religion—continued from page 39.

St. Matthew was one of Christ's disciples, and yet he never had the idea that it was necessary to believe anything to go to heaven. "Blessed are the peacemakers, blessed are the humble, the meek and the merciful, for they will have treasure in heaven." All this suited the capitalist very nicely when they took over from feudalism, be humble and submissive, and put up with this "vale of tears" for treasure in heaven (but I want my treasure in this world).

When we come to St. Mark's gospel we find "He that believeth will be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." (Ch. 16 verse 16.) According to St. Matthew unbelievers will go to heaven, if there is such a place, but according to St. Mark we will not, and yet these two disciples were with Christ. When we get to St. John's gospel we find that everlasting fire is

the punishment for not believing. St. Mark goes on to tell us "And these signs will follow those who believe. In my name will they cast out devils, and if they drink any deadly thing it will not hurt them." Bring on your believer; I'll not trouble him to cast out any devils, but drink just a wine glass full of sulphuric acid and if it does hurt him, then I should like to know how the conjuring trick is done.

What conclusions can we form from all this contradiction and confusion of ideas? There is only one answer, the Bible cannot be inspired, and as such it should be relegated to the place to which it rightly belongs alongside of many similar manuscripts. This would at least help to free many from the bondage of religious ties which is causing them to read the Bible under the threat of God and with the glare of hell.

(To be continued)

H. JARVIS.

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY—6

English Naval Mutinies 1797

THERE are two old, historic and important roads leading out of London, known now-a-days as the A2 and A3 and leading to Dover and Portsmouth respectively. In the late 18th century these were loose surfaced highways, infested by highwaymen and toll gate keepers.

During April, May and June of the year 1797 there was much thundering of horses hooves, rumbling of carriage wheels and creaking of wide flung turnpike

gates on these two roads. There was a dashing hither and thither between Whitehall and Portsmouth and Sheerness. Steaming horses were urged on by whip and spur to break speed records. Terrific consternation—the British navy was on strike—right bang in the middle of a war.

Napoleon was threatening to invade England. Parts of the fleet were at anchor at Plymouth, at Spithead, at Yarmouth and at The Nore, all in readiness to

attack the French fleet if it emerged from Brest.

In March and April the seamen of the Spithead fleet sent a number of petitions to the Admiralty, to Admiral Lord Howe, to Parliament, to Charles James Fox and to the king. The sailors had many grievances.

The main grievance was pay. Rates of pay that were set during the reign of Charles II still prevailed in the reign of George III, about 130 years after, despite great increases in prices. From a sailor's meagre pay there were many stoppages and most men's pay was months and months in arrears. Now they asked for a rise and regular pay.

They also wanted an increase in the quantity and even more important, an improvement in the quality of their food. The food they received was maggotty, rotten and mostly inedible. Any little extra they requested was charged to them at extortionate rates and supplies for the sick were embezzled by officers. They wanted proper care for the sick and pay when wounded.

Seamen were kept to their ships for years without shore leave. Conditions were so vile that the Admiralty was afraid to grant shore leave knowing that the men would not return to the sea. Now the sailors petitioned for a modest measure of leave.

The men did not protest about discipline but they did call for the removal of the disciplinary abuses that were rife. Flogging was the main disciplinary punishment and, although naval regulations laid down a maximum of twelve strokes for an offence, no officer was deterred from giving more, even to over a hundred lashes, often for the most trivial offence that was probably provoked by the officers themselves.

"To be flogged was to be tortured. The first stroke to be laid on by the brawny boatswain's mate, as hard as he could at the full length of his arm, would always jerk an involuntary 'Ugh!' out of even the most hardened unfortunate 'seized up to' the grating at the gangway; six blows tore the flesh horribly, while after a dozen the back looked like 'so much putrified liver.' After a time the bones showed through, blood burst from the bitten tongue and lips of the victim, and, expelled from his lungs, dribbled from his nostrils and ears. To make sure that the standard of hitting was maintained, the wielder of the cat would be changed every two or three dozen and the blood was wiped off the thongs between each stroke to prevent them sticking together. . . . A severe flogging smashed a man, he was ill for weeks after it, and rarely recovered his self-respect if he originally had any good in him."—"Sea Life in Nelson's Time," by John Masefield.)

Ships were rotten, leaky and foul smelling; drinking water was foul; the food caused scurvy; ships doctors were drunkards and without skill; officers like the notorious Captain Bligh of the "Bounty" were brutes.

The war with France made it necessary to double and treble the size of the navy and the ships were manned by men released from debtors prisons, shanghaied from merchant ships in port and recruited by quotas from each county, a bounty being offered to volunteers. Quite a number of men, better educated than the regular seamen, were attracted into the navy by the offer of the bounty.

Secretly, carefully and with success an organisation had been built up in the separate fleets although with little contact between the fleets. A few sporadic, single ship mutinies against the vile conditions had occurred at times during the previous few years. The organisation in the separate fleets in 1797 appears to have been spontaneous.

Very wordy petitions, expressing loyalty to king and country and willingness to fight the French if the invasion became imminent, but demanding redress for their grievances were despatched and replies patiently awaited. The organisation at Spithead was tightened up, each ship appointing two delegates and the battleship "Queen Charlotte" selected as unofficial headquarters. Plans for action were circulated, signals arranged and a time set for action. The delegates were mainly young men holding some non-commissioned rank.

Before the plans were complete events on the "Defence" precipitated action and the whole Spithead fleet went on strike. It was called a mutiny but it had none of the hall-marks of the usual mutiny. The men carried on with their normal duties, respected their officers but refused to put to sea. The delegates were afforded the privileges of officers, they maintained strict discipline amongst the men and issued many statements and orders for the control of the strike. Everything on the surface appeared normal but the officers had no power.

The Admiralty and the officers made threats, but the men remained unconcerned. The Admiralty made promises to redress some of the grievances, but the men rejected them. A bill to increase sailors' pay was introduced into Parliament but there was delay and procrastination and the men became impatient. The most detested officers were put ashore and a fracas broke out on the "London" resulting in the death of one man. Further bloodshed was averted by the delegates and Admiral Colpoys. The delegates court martialled the officers concerned found them guilty but relieved them.

When the government realised that the seamen were not to be trifled with it granted their demands. But the delegates were still suspicious. They demanded a Royal Pardon in writing and that the officers they had set ashore should not be returned to their respective ships. Lord Howe was sent to Spithead with the Royal Pardon and authority to grant the men's demands.

Having achieved their demands the sailors organised a grand gala and there was much carousal and fraternisation between Lord Howe, Portsmouth civil authorities and the seamen. The two most prominent of the delegates, 25 year old Valentine Joyce, Quarter Master's Mate of the "Royal George" and John Fleming, 25 year old A.B., were especially feted.

As the Spithead fleet celebrated its success the Nore fleet went into action to achieve similar improvements in conditions and pay. The organisation here was less complete. John Parker, a 30 year old ex-schoolmaster, rated as a supernumary A.B. on the Depot ship "Sandwich," was quickly elevated to the position of President of the delegates.

The "Sandwich" was a 40 year old decaying corpse ship, smaller than Nelson's "Victory" with a full war complement of 750 men. When it laid at Sheerness in 1797 it had on board about 1,600 men.

"One has a vision of writhing humanity, like worms crawling over one another in the foetid pot of a boy fisherman. . . ."—"The Floating Republic," by Dobree and Mainwaring.) This hotbed of fever and disease became the headquarters of The Nore fleet mutiny.

The naval authorities took advantage of the weaker

organisation of The Nore seamen and refused to talk with the delegates, making stronger threats backed with a show of military force. All the ships of the Nore fleet were not unanimous in their support of the mutiny and before long the struggle began to weaken. The "Clyde" and the "San Fiorenzo" pulled out from the mutinous fleet.

Food supplies became short and the delegates decided to hold up merchant shipping en route to and from London. This raised the ire of the London merchants and an emergency naval force was recruited to be sent against the mutineers, civilians from all walks enlisting for the job.

By June it was becoming more and more difficult for the delegates to hold The Nore fleet together. The "Repulse" and the "Leopard" attempted to escape and were fired on by the other mutineers, only the "Leopard" getting away. During the following days other ships drew out. As arguments went on in the ships the people of Sheerness saw the Red flags replaced by the blue and white, then, perhaps the red ones going up again, to be replaced yet again.

Men tried to escape. The authorities were jubilant

and took steps to prevent escape. A pardon was offered to men who would give themselves up. On June 13th John Parker handed over the command of the "Sandwich" to the officers after a meeting of the men of that ship. So the Nore mutiny dissolved.

The naval authorities took revenge. Parker, with 28 others, was executed, a few others received from 40 to 380 lashes with the cat, whilst others were imprisoned.

The Plymouth fleet gave slight support to the Spithead seamen whilst the Yarmouth fleet adhered to their comrades at The Nore.

The Spithead affair achieved immediate results whilst the Nore mutiny appeared to have failed. But the fierceness of the Nore outbreak to which the Yarmouth fleet had been attached, the length of time it lasted and the threat to London was probably a greater contributory cause of the naval reforms that were introduced during the early years of the 19th century.

Books to read: "The Naval Mutinies of 1797," by C. Gill. "The Floating Republic," by G. E. Mainwaring and B. Dobree.

W. WATERS.

TO TOM, DICK, HARRY (OR JOAN)

PERHAPS you are reading this journal for the first time. You might even have obtained it through somebody knocking at the door and asking you if you were interested in reading the SOCIALIST STANDARD. The name meant nothing to you but the word Socialist caught your ear and as you are perhaps more than a little interested in making a little research into this term, you made a half-hesitant investigation into your pocket and reluctantly withdrew the precious coins, glancing uncertainly at the cover page and you then wound your way back slowly into your restricted world called home. Anyway now you have your first SOCIALIST STANDARD but we hope not your last.

Our members who have done some "door-knocking" which is known as canvassing have often wondered what you make of all this puzzling stuff. For there is no doubt a lot of what you see here must make strange reading to you and perhaps you feel more than a little annoyed with some of the more obscure passages. This is not any suggestion of lack of intelligence on your part but rather, as in all cases where human beings first come into contact with new ideas, the brain cudgeling hurts more than a little.

Well, heaven preserve us from condescension as they say in all good circles, but this article is specially concerned for your sake to make a simple outline of our case and what it is we stand for. The first thing to say is that we can safely agree about certain things no matter what ideas or feelings, political or other, you may hold at the moment. For instance, you would most certainly agree that it would be a good thing to rid our world—and if not ours then that of our children or perhaps their children—of war, fear of unemployment, the constant nagging worry about making ends meet and uncertainty of the future, dictatorship and its

accompanying brutalities, race hatred and all its ugly manifestations such as can be seen in Kenya and South Africa and many, many other of the nasty aspects of our existence. It is at this point unfortunate that we part company so far as our ability to agree is concerned, anyway. Either you will throw your hands up in despair and say it is all beyond you and nothing can be done about it and it must all be left as hopefully as possible to the "bigwigs"; or else when we do put our case for Socialism, as will be done in a moment, your immediate reaction will be that it is all a dream and can never come about; not for a thousand years, anyway!

Well then, let's start at the beginning. In the beginning as they say was the deed. Well the deed in this case is (a) the plain and simple fact that we must all eat to keep alive, that we need shelter from the rain and cold (in Great Britain at any rate!) and also require clothes to cover our pathetic bodies and keep the chills away. Of course there are lots of other things we need as well. For instance, annual holidays and the possession of a television or radio set are considered a necessity by most people, but food, clothing and shelter are enough to be getting on with. Now there is (b) the second simple fact about our lives and that is that all this food, clothing and shelter cannot be had without money; and then there is (c) the third fact of our existence namely that we must find a job to earn the necessary wage to provide us with this money. Now, in the present world facts (a) and (b) are common to practically all human beings but the third fact (c) is true only of those people whom we classify as belonging to the working-class, being ALL those who *must* work for a wage, salary, etc., depending solely on their earnings (or any meagre savings from these earnings)

for their and their dependants livelihoods. Of course there are some people who work on their own account either alone or with a few employees but the main thing to stress at the moment is not only that these people, sometimes referred to as "the middle class," also HAVE to work but that the dominating factor of our society is that the vast majority of people belong to the working-class. As you can see, this includes not only labourers, engineers, builders, etc., but also journalists, teachers, technicians, etc. In other words, all those who have to work and who depend exclusively on their work, whether it is for a private individual, a company, or a state concern.

In sharp contrast to this there is a minority of humanity who do *not* need to look for work to provide themselves and their families with more than sufficient to live with for the simple reason that they receive enough in the way of profits, dividends or interest, etc., to do so without working for a wage. These people are known as capitalists and belong to the capitalist class. Now, the question here immediately raises itself as to why this state of affairs is as it is. A little closer examination will show that all capitalists are owners of property, be it in the form of bonds, shares, savings certificates, etc., or direct ownership of factories, blocks of houses, transport, etc. All this constitutes to ownership of the means of production, which includes all the tools, instruments and machinery of production and distribution. Of course, some argue that workers too own property but in the first place our pathetic collections of bits and pieces of furniture, etc., are *NOT* means of production in the aforementioned sense and secondly even when some few have managed to gather together, beetle-like, a few shares, savings, etc., these are not enough to keep hunger away for any appreciable period of time. When we turn to the capitalists there is, however, a different tale to tell. Here the case is of large aggregations of shares, etc., of government stock, or ownership of private concerns, amply sufficient to provide for him and his family a comfortable, and in the case of the richer ones, a super-luxurious existence. Of course, there are instances where a capitalist loses his wealth for one reason or another and then he has to join the working-class queue for a job. But these are comparatively rare instances in the modern world of large scale ownership. It would be more to the point to stress the rarity with which a worker becomes a capitalist. This is because so much money is required to launch out on a new profitable venture that it is almost always out of the worker's reach. "Born a worker, die a worker" is a grim fact of the working-class existence.

As already explained it is by virtue of his ownership of these means of production that the capitalist can live on profits and dividends. But the question now arises HOW these are obtained.

In the first place, as you know, the things that are produced in the factories, etc., belong to the capitalists. But to convert them into money and profits he has to sell them on a market at a price which realises him something over and above that which he laid out to produce them. It must be stressed here that in going to work and producing things there is absolutely no

question of "partnership in industry," or "joy in labour" and such-like phrases that our employers and their pen-pushing Fleet Street agents love to regale us with, as being the reason they employ us but simply that they know that after paying a sum of wages and other standing expenses to produce a certain quantity of goods they can now proceed to sell these for a larger amount. This profit is now used to expand the undertaking and serve as their (good!) living expenses. The worker, alas, is left in the exact same economic position as he was before HE expended HIS energies to produce these things, which remain in the capitalist's possession. In short, for the capitalist, expansion and increase of wealth. For the worker, stagnation and a life-long economic struggle. And remember, this (the capitalist's increasing wealth) can only have happened because you as a worker have produced more than you have got back in wages, otherwise profits would be impossible and capitalism could not function. In short, the whole basis of capitalism, which is the name given to the economic system we're living under, is the capitalist exploitation of wage-labour, where the motive of production is sale on a market for a profit.

But as you know selling things is not always such an easy matter. Frequently the markets of the world become glutted not because the poor have all they need but simply that they cannot buy back enough of the goods they have produced. Then competition, such as for instance the present keen competition between German and British goods, becomes fierce. And here we come to the important point. It is out of this fierce quest on the part of one capitalist group for markets, spheres of influence and also sources of raw materials such as rubber, oil (and a modern up-to-date one, uranium), cheap colonial labour, strategic routes, areas, bases, etc., in conflict with other capitalist groups that we find the source of the great power conflicts which have led and will lead to wars—unless capitalism is done away with. Out of this strife and conflict comes the building up of huge war preparations, atomic and hydrogen bomb research and, the vast amount of wealth spent on what is euphemistically called "national security." International insecurity would be a more appropriate phrase. After devoting so much of their revenue to their war effort not much is left for other things and we know how parsimonious and niggardly our governments (governments are, by the way, executive committees, so to speak, of the capitalist class) are when it comes to such things as education, health, pensions, etc. It is for these very good reasons that the Socialist is vehemently opposed to Capitalism and wants it abolished. It's of course true that there is no point in doing away with capitalism if there's nothing to replace it with. But the Socialist says there is something. It is Socialism. It has already been explained that Capitalism is a system of production for profit. Socialism will be a system in complete contrast to this, of production for use. There will be no private ownership of means of production and distribution as these will be commonly held by the whole of society. The only reason (and what better reason, dear reader, can you proffer?) for producing things will be to satisfy people's needs and taste, physical, artistic, and so on. Sale for profit will be inconceivable and impossible. In

a socialist society people will have FREE ACCESS to the things that they have produced conjointly. There will be no one to sell, no one to buy. Production and distribution will be intelligently (as human beings are eminently!) arranged and devised with the sole idea of making life for everyone as full of joy, interest and activated, mentally and physically, as possible. As capital will no longer exist (capital is wealth used to produce goods for sale on a market) wage-slavery will cease to exist as well.

Wage-slavery, by the way, is synonymous with the word employment and that is why we said earlier on that both unemployment and employment will not exist in a socialist world. With the end of wage-slavery,

selling, buying, investment and so on, money will no longer be required as money is primarily an economic means of exchange. It will be distribution and administration as opposed to exchange and governmental rule. Where there will be no selling, no markets will exist. No markets, no competition. No strife, no wars, no brutality, no petty hatreds or racial antagonisms, no crime. Concentration camps, prisons, death cells and practically all the other hideous features of our world, which all spring ultimately from the basic social and economic set-up will vanish into the limbo of history. Peace and harmony in life, these will truly exist in socialist society.

M. JUDD.

THE MALADY LINGERS ON

Do you ever listen to the words of the popular songs on the radio? You have probably heard some of the melodies, but the lyrics are usually so puerile that regular listeners must become impervious to the sickly sentiments they suffer. I happened to read in that picturesque newspaper *The Sunday Pictorial* (Jan. 3rd) that the words of a certain song had given one columnist quite a shaking. The gramophone record in question was "I Heard A Baby Cry," and it was described as "2 m. 17 s. of unbelievable, incredible, revolting piffle with pips on."

This line of criticism set me thinking. We are accustomed to hearing harsh things said about the wailers and the howlers and the sobbers who masquerade as "singing stars." But it's not quite so usual to have someone analyse the words that are wailed, howled or sobbed. Perhaps there is scope for further investigation.

As the columnist indicated, the theme of the record that so upset him is the story of a gentleman who hears his baby cry as he is about to walk out on his wife, and so walks in again. The situation is undoubtedly "corn soggy with syrup," yet the facts upon which it is based are taken from real life. There is a great deal of child neglect—the failure of marriages *does* give rise to many problems. It could be that the lyrics of popular songs are not so very far from reality as they seem on the surface.

The ballads of old used to tell, in popular form, tales of adventure and gallantry. The minstrel earned his living by doing, on a small scale, substantially the same job as the "entertainer of the million" does today. In both cases, the subject of their songs is a reflection of the conditions of the times or the aspirations of the mass of people.

The element of romance has been a constant factor—nowhere does the Middle-Ages concept of romantic love flourish so perennially as in the popular songs of the present time. With this basic formula to work on, the lyric writers have been obliged to introduce here and there one or two other ideas that the paying public can be persuaded to want to hear—for a few weeks at any rate. Financial success, as well as romantic suc-

cess, is a fairly popular theme, as the following extract from a work entitled "Rags To Riches" shows:

"Must I forever stay a beggar
Whose golden dreams will not come true?
Or will I go from rags to riches?
My fate is up to you."

It is quite a romantic thought that getting rich doesn't really depend on such sordid transactions as hiring labour, acquiring shares, or otherwise having someone give you the money—it depends on one's mate, who is presumably of the ambitious or just plain nagging-for-more-money variety. "I am what I am today because of my wife" sounds much better than "... because of my property."

And, talking of property, have you noticed how property relationships intrude even into popular songs? Just recently there has come on the market a lyrical lecture on the rights and duties of patriarchal marriage, which includes such phrases as "other men's wives and other men's sweethearts are taboo." And the police message that "Somebody Stole My Gal" is still being broadcast.

Then there are the tales of the unrequited lover—and it must be remarked how often money seems to be the fly in the romantic ointment. Particularly poignant is the Johnny Ray lament:

"Love came demanding what I couldn't pay
For the Lady drinks Champagne"

which implies that had the lady been satisfied with bottled beer the course of true love might have run smoothly.

One of the latest and most blatant examples of the fact that money makes the capitalist world go round is a thoroughly revolting unburdening entitled "Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend." The words are at best cynical and at worst disgusting—because sentimentality does not obscure the cynical and disgusting philosophy presented. As, for instance, this advice to the business girl:

"There may come a time
When some hard-boiled employer
Thinks you're 'oh, so nice'
But get that ice or it's no dice!"

For the benefit of the uninitiated, a free transla-

tion of the latter line would be "but refuse to comply with his wishes unless he gives you jewellery." This is the plot of a seemingly gay, light-hearted song. Can you wonder that the more serious reality upon which it is based is a mire of unhappiness?

There are plenty of other examples in song of the traits and behaviour that are bred in present society.

ABOUT BOOKS

Even in these days of scientific research, men cling to some very peculiar superstitions. Some of the beliefs and superstitions held by man in his less enlightened past now appear to be downright ridiculous. Worship flows from superstition and Mr. H. Cutner, in his book, "A Short History of Sex-Worship," portrays for us some of the queer ideas, customs and forms of worship of bygone days.

For primitive man fertility was something to worship. Good crops and plentiful cattle meant an adequate food supply. Large families ensured many hands to sow and till and hunt and work. Famine and barrenness were things to dread. Small wonder that in his imaginings he conceived gods of fertility who had power to make or mar his existence. Such gods would need to receive sacrifices and to be worshipped in order to induce them to cast a favourable eye in the direction of the worshipper.

From such superstitions arose many religious cults and practices. The sun and the seasons came in for a good share of worship; so also did the human sex organs. This worship of man's generative powers is known as phallic worship and has played a great part in the ideas and practices of many religious cults.

Mr. Cutner traces the history of phallic worship from earliest times, through the days of ancient Egypt, biblical times, the ancient Far East, Rome and India and shows us how many of the old-time phallic practices have passed into modern religions in a disguised form. He quotes from many sources but we think that the ideas of some of the authorities are a little far-fetched. It appears to us that some of them have seen a phallus around every corner and have mistaken everything that even remotely resembles a male or female sex organ for a sex symbol. We get the impression that some completely irrelevant factors have been viewed solely from an angle suitable to the investigator's foregone conclusions.

Nevertheless, Mr. Cutner, in presenting this material to us in a concise and easily readable form, has done good work. Collected into his 215 pages is more useful material on the subject than is usually found in far weightier tomes.

The book is published by Watts and Co. in paper cover for 2s. 6d. and is available to members of the S.P.G.B. from Head Office book department.

From Australia comes a novel by a certain Frank J. Hardy entitled "Power without Glory." The theme of the story is expressed in a quotation from Charles Kingsley that precedes part one of the book.

"A working man who deserts his own class, tries to get on and rise above it, enters into a lie."

The story opens in 1890 and leads us through a series of Australian political events up to very recent

Of course, most lyrics don't attempt to put over any kind of message. They aren't meant to be meaningful—they are just familiar and on the whole pleasant-sounding words strung together to achieve some sort of metre and an occasional rhyme.

But when the lyric writer decides to put ideas into his work it is interesting to note the sort of ideas that find their way on to the music market. STAN.

years. It tells of a young working class man who, by unscrupulous and callous methods, rises out of his class to become a millionaire. Our knowledge of Australian political history is not sufficiently detailed for us to distinguish if all the political events narrated are completely factual. The names of a number of prominent and well-known Australian politicians appear in the story with very little said to their credit.

The author tells us in his concluding note that his book, and others to follow, will not advocate the class struggle but will recognise its existence; that Capitalism, having served its purpose, is convulsively passing, to be replaced by a higher social order, Socialism. Mr. Hardy's sympathies obviously lie with the Australian communists.

The book is illustrated but not well produced having a paper cover and poor quality print, which leads us to suppose that the author had some difficulty in finding a publisher.

We referred recently to books by Jack London and one by Irving Stone. We have recently read Irving Stone's story of Jack London entitled, "Sailor on Horse Back." This is an earlier book of Mr. Stone's and the style is not so mature as in "Darrow for the Defence."

Jack London was undoubtedly a sincere, well loved and exceptional man. An illegitimate child, reared in poverty, he became a news-boy, a pirate, a laundry worker, a seal hunter, a tramp, a gold prospector, a lecturer, a farmer and, after many other things, one of the world's foremost novelists and short story writers. As a writer he earned fabulous sums, every penny of which, Mr. Stone tells us, was mortgaged before London received it because of his super-generosity and hare-brained schemes to build boats, houses and farms.

Jack London was called a socialist. Some of his writings, such as his small booklet, "The Strength of the Strong" are masterpieces of educational propaganda dressed in story form. We would classify him as a "Rebel Labourite" but much of his writing was useful in helping workers to an appreciation of their class status in capitalist society. His life was a series of sensations culminating in suicide in November, 1916. The story of his life makes interesting reading.

W. WATERS.

GLASGOW LECTURES

(Arranged by Glasgow City and Kelvingrove Branches)

At Central Halls, Bath Street, Glasgow,

On Sunday evenings at 7.30 p.m.

March 7th "The S.P.G.B.—Its Theory and Practice"—Speakers, Darrock and Russell.

March 21st "The Last Fifty Years"—R. Reid.

April 4th (Subject to be announced)—J. Higgins.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Last October a member suggested to S.W. London branch that a "Sale of Work" should be held to raise the funds a little. The branch agreed immediately; a small committee was set up, and December 19th was arranged as the date for the sale. All London branches were circularised, as were some thirty members who had already indicated that they were prepared to collaborate, inviting them, not only to the sale, but to donate some article of whatever shape, size or description. In the end, although many of the articles were obviously not "home made," a good, varied collection was offered for sale, for which the donors are heartily thanked. Some of them were apparently turning teetotal: there were three sets of drinking glasses and two bottles of mead. The sale commenced at 3 p.m., and within 10 minutes there was £2 in the kitty. Thereafter trade was not quite so brisk, but there was £7 in the till by 5 p.m., and when the remainder of the goods were sold during a social in the evening the total had reached, with the aid of a raffle, £19 5s. 10d.

Some of the children present in the afternoon were too young to appreciate the "Sale of Work," but proved good customers in the canteen.

A further sale will no doubt be organised. Craftsmen to work!

A further reminder of Conference, April 15th, 16th and 17th at Conway Hall. Social and dance is being held on the Saturday (16th) and delegates requiring accommodation are urged to contact, through their branches, the Central Organiser.

The third of the series of meetings organised by Paddington Branch is being held at Denison House on Sunday, March 7th, at 7 p.m. The fourth and final meeting is being held on Sunday, 4th April. The two earlier meetings have been successful and the Branch urges Members to bring friends and sympathisers along to ensure the success of the final meetings.

It is not too late to send your annual subscription for the SOCIALIST STANDARD—5s. 6d. post free per annum.

P.H.

HEAD OFFICE FORUM

A Forum will be held at Head Office each Saturday in March at 7.30 p.m.

"Is Marxism Economic Determinism?"

Panel: H. Waite, F. Evans, E. Wilmott and C. Groves.

BETHNAL GREEN MEETING

At Bethnal Green Library (opposite Tube) on Friday, March 12th, at 7.30 p.m.

"War—This Year? Next Year?"—E. Wilmott.

ISLINGTON BRANCH DISCUSSIONS

At Co-op. Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.

Thursday, 4th March, at 8 p.m. "How and Why Socialism Will Come"—Opener, J. McGregor.

Thursday, 18th March, at 8 p.m. "Declaration of Principles"—Opener, A. Turner.

DENISON HOUSE

293 Vauxhall Bridge Road, Victoria, S.W.1.

SUNDAY APRIL 4th

7 p.m. prompt

1904 **50** 1954

YEARS OF SOCIALISM

Concluding meeting in series

"The Socialist Future"

Speakers: C. May and A. Turner

★

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.

Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Exmouth Market.

Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.

Thursdays: Tower Hill.

Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

HAMPSTEAD BRANCH DISCUSSIONS

at Blue Danube Cafe, 153 Finchley Road,
(Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd., Met. Stations)

Wednesdays at 8 p.m.

10th March "Is Marxism Economic Determination?"
E. Wilmott.

24th March—"Is the Declaration of Principles
J. Darey. [Outdated?]"

LEWISHAM LECTURE

at Co-op Hall,

Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford,

on Monday, 15th March, at 8 p.m.

"Is Marxism Economic Determination?"
E. Wilmott.

DUNDEE GROUP

Meets Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at Woodworkers Hall, Coupars Alley, Wellgate. Correspondence to P. G. Cavanagh, c/o above address.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to the Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 3rd and 17th March, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 57, Fareham Avenue, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets alternate Thursdays from 14th January, at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd. (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6

Palmers Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m., 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, South end (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cotts, 109, Kingwood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month 7.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murlton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Sec. tary.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m., at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to D. Deutz, 21, Kenilworth Gardens, Seven Kings, Essex.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 8 p.m., "Francile," Rawreth Lane, Rawreth, Shot. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley, Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. 1st and 3rd Thursdays (4th and 18th March) Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 78, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., H. C. Langston, 99, Rommany Road, West Norwood, S.E.27.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Walsley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wren, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. I. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. I. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd and 4th Fridays in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 3, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea. Enquiries to J. Richmond, 3, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 1st, 15th and 29th March, at 8 p.m., in St Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 3, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197 Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Ivomey 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware, Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., discussion after Branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdian Road.

Illington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. C. Rowan, 39, Ellington Street, Barnsbury, N.7.

Kington-on-Thames. Sec., 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (T.L. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., 9 Vicarage Rd, Kington (opp. Bentalls).

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall (Room 1) Davenport Road, Ruxley Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trade Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 9th and 23rd March. George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey 2, Denison Ave., Winton, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5799.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 596 Vol. 50 April, 1954

Socialist Retrospect —

The S.P.G.B. in 1904

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN was formally constituted at an Inaugural Meeting held at Printers Hall, Bartlett's Passage, Fetter Lane, London, on Sunday, 12th June, 1904. 142 handed in their names for enrolment, but the number that eventually constituted the Party was 114. The story of the events that led up to the formation of the Party has already been told in detail in a chapter in the pamphlet "Questions of the Day."

The world the Party was born into was, in many respects, a vastly different one from the world of today. It is necessary to bear this in mind in order to understand the early struggles and the subjects that gave rise to a certain amount of internal friction. It was a slower world. There were no

SHALL GERMANY RE-ARM?

THE CHINESE ADVANCE

HOT GOSPEL

THE PARIS COMMUNE

AN OLD AGE TRAGEDY

MAY DAY

MEETING

Sunday, May 2nd, at 7 p.m.

CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQ., W.C.1

Speakers: F. WILMOT, C. MAY. Chairman: F. JAMES.

Admission Free

aeroplanes, wireless nor huge ocean liners; no world wars, belt systems nor traffic problems; no petrol buses, electric buses nor tube trains; no cinemas, dog-racing nor jazz; and no health nor unemployment insurance. Horse buses, hansom cabs, bicycles and steam trains were the means of locomotion. Hours of work were long but, in general, not as intense as today. Translations of foreign radical literature were scarce. Printing, premises and halls were relatively cheap. Outdoor meeting places were prolific; you could set up a platform almost anywhere. The outstanding questions of the time were religion, the woman question, Home Rule and reforms. The active membership of radical movements was small but extremely vocal.

The Party came into existence surrounded by groups each claiming to hold the key to social salvation; the Social Democratic Federation, the Independent Labour Party, the Fabian Society, the recently formed Socialist Labour Party, the Industrial Unionists, Land reformers, and others, all with a variety of reformist proposals but all looked upon as near to us and there-

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Monthly

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fore our most dangerous opponents. To defeat their arguments and sustain our claim to be in the direct Marxian tradition it was necessary for members to have a sound knowledge of economics, of history and of the Materialist Conception of History. This informed opposition has long since almost entirely disappeared and theoretical discussions have languished. In the early years of the Party men whose names figured prominently on the theoretical side of the working class movement were either still alive or not long dead; men such as Engles, Liebknecht, Lafargue, Kautsky, Bernstein, Pleckanoff, Labriola, De Leon, Louis Bondin and others. To defend our position it was necessary to constantly refer to the writings of these people, as well as Marx.

The Party was founded by members who had broken away from the Social Democratic Federation. Some of the founders carried over into the new party confused ideas on organisation and policy that were common in the Federation. The internal disputes of subsequent years were the means of clarifying views and hammering out a sound policy.

The early members were pioneers; enthusiastic, fanatical and uncompromising. To them the Socialist position was all that really mattered. Hence in spite of the smallness of the membership the Party was extraordinarily active. In the London area alone about 40 meetings a month were held. It was, of course, easier to hold outdoor meetings then than it is now. The cinema the bus and the motor car were not so obtrusive.

Before the Inaugural Meeting the dissatisfied members of the S.D.F. had held a meeting in May at which it was decided to go forward with the formation of a new party. At this meeting a Provisional Committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements. This Committee submitted to the Inaugural Meeting the Declaration of Principles they had drafted, which were adopted. The Declaration of Principles owed a good deal to the Principles formulated by the "Socialist League" and printed in the first number of the League's journal "The Commonwealth." The following quotations from these principles will make clear the connection:—

"As the civilised world is at present constituted, there are two classes of Society—the one possessing wealth and the instruments of its production, the other producing wealth by means of those instruments but only by leave and for the use of the possessing classes.

"These two classes are necessarily in antagonism to one another. The possessing class, or non-producers, can only live as a class on the unpaid labour of the producers—the more unpaid labour they can wring out of them, the richer they will be; therefore the producing class—the workers—are driven to strive to better themselves at the expense of the possessing class, and the conflict between the two is ceaseless . . .

" . . . The sole possession of the producing class is the power of labour inherent in their bodies; but since, as we have already said, the rich classes possess all the instruments of labour, that is, the land, capital, and machinery, the producers or workers are forced to sell their sole possession, the power of labour, on such

terms as the possessing class will grant them.

"These terms are, that after they have produced enough to keep them in working order, and enable them to beget children to take their places when they are worn out, the surplus of their products shall belong to the possessors of property, which bargain is based on the fact that every man working in a civilised community can produce more than he needs for his own sustenance.

"This relation of the possessing class to the working class is the essential basis of the system of producing for profit, on which our modern Society is founded."

After pointing out that neither nationalisation of the land nor so-called state socialism were any use, as they would leave the capitalist system intact, the manifesto concludes:

"The Socialist League therefore aims at the realisation of complete Revolutionary Socialism, and well knows that this can never happen in any one country without the help of the workers of all civilisation."

Some of the founder members of the party had attended classes conducted by Aveling and Morris and had a great respect for Morris in particular. In fact one of the early Party pamphlets was a reprint of some of Morris's lectures "Art, Labour and Socialism."

The Inaugural Meeting got through a great deal of work. The name of the Party was decided upon after the following three proposals had been defeated:—

"The Social Democratic Party."

"The Social Democratic Party of Great Britain."

"The Socialist Party of Great Britain and Ireland."

Then a motion was agreed to that the object of the Party be the one that has remained our object ever since. Draft rules were submitted, some of which were adopted for sending to Branches and members. Amendments and additions to be submitted within fourteen days and then the draft rules to be referred to a general meeting to be held three months later.

A General Secretary and Treasurer were provisionally appointed and twelve members were elected as a provisional Executive Committee. It was agreed that a leaflet be drawn up setting forth the Party's position regarding immediate demands and municipal action.

The Executive Committee was instructed to open a fund for the purpose of establishing a Party Press and to submit a scheme in connection with this to the next General Meeting. Arrangements were also agreed upon to organise a series of mass meetings in different parts of London and half the collections taken up were to be sent to the Party centre.

A motion was also carried that the Executive Committee convene a special meeting of members as soon as possible to discuss and determine the attitude of the Party towards trade unions. The E.C. was also instructed to arrange a lecture list for the Party.

The Inaugural Meeting finished at 10 p.m. after a collection of £1 7s. 2d. had been taken up.

The first General Secretary appointed was C. Lehané and he had a very busy time; he had to do a

considerable amount of speaking as well as secretarial work. One of the first jobs was to find some place for the Executive to meet.

The first meeting of the Executive Committee was

held on the 18th June, 1904, at The Communist Club, 107, Charlotte Street, London, W.1. This had been the meeting place of the old Communist Party of 1848.

(To be continued)

GILMAC.

HOT GOSPEL

THIS writer enjoyed his visit to the evangelist crusade at Harringay. He listened to Billy Graham, the newest American revival preacher, and went home feeling that sin had a lot to be said for it.

It has been impossible for even the most uninterested to know nothing about the London revivalist campaign, in the same way as it is impossible to be unaware of the Cup Final or the Derby. For three months the hoardings had giant yellow-and-blue Billy Graham posters; for three weeks before he came the papers reported, praised and—mostly—blamed Billy Graham. "He runs religion like big business" said *The People*, and called him "Silly Billy." *The Mirror* thought London "a poor sort of Sodom and Gomorrah for such fervid cleansing treatment." *The "New Statesman's"* versifying wit sparkled with "Jesus Inc." "Start your crusade among your own people. London can wait," growled the *Pictorial*; *Reynolds'* had the same line—"Now this Yank says we're heathens!" And, though most of them agreed about his film-star charm, Nathaniel Gubbins wouldn't even allow that. "I have seen," he wrote, "many butchers with kindlier faces."

The unfriendliness of the Press has disturbed the Graham entourage but little: "You can say what you like about me. I will not hate. My Christian heart will not allow it." Mrs. Graham was possibly a little nearer the real heart of the matter when she said: "Billy would rather people said bad things about him than that they said nothing at all." It sounds a pleasant and naive euphemism for the familiar business maxim that there is no such thing as bad publicity. The campaign is, indeed, a very business-like affair. The reported cost of the London meetings is a hundred thousand pounds. American and British supporters, most of them business men, are the backers; a shipping line provided free first-class passages from America for Mr. and Mrs. Graham, and his own salary is five thousand a year.

At the time of writing, in the early stages of the campaign, Harringay Arena has been filled every night. Few of the eleven thousand free seats were empty on the night we went; nor should they have been, with all the advertising and all the showmanship. Loudspeakers everywhere; snappy brochure-like hymn books passed round; in the centre, over the spot where Tommy Farr fought Max Baer, a huge red box-kite proclaiming "Jesus says 'I am the way and the life'." At one end was a railed-in pulpit (with an American Broadcasting Corporation placard), and behind it, sweeping down from the roof, rank upon rank of white-bloused choristers.

Everything was bigger, better, brighter. The

announcer was a breezy, salesman-like young American. He talked and boosted and wisecracked for half an hour. Introducing the publisher of Billy Graham's book, now on sale; informing mothers we have a room where children may be left; tomorrow night an evangelist from Hollywood will tell his experiences among the stars (one visualised Miss Monroe, all a-flutter and cooing "The Scriptures is a girl's best friend"). The announcer conducted the choir. His arms waved high: "Gee, that was grand, folks! How about the last chorus again? All together . . ." But the singing was magnificent.

And finally Billy Graham. He was preceded by Beverley Shea, who sang a religious song in the Perry Como manner; and, as the last treacly note died away, Graham stepped into the pulpit. Everybody stand up; everybody be still; let no man or woman make a sound. Now you may sit. Hold up your Bibles—we wanna see that everybody's gotta Bible. That's it.

The timing and the psychology were marvellous. Billy Graham himself was a disappointment. It could reasonably be said that he had to be, that the build-up was too good; nevertheless, the *Manchester Guardian's* comment was fair enough—"he lacks the oratorical gift." The expected storm of hellfire gospel materialized as a mere stiff breeze. This writer heard hotter Bible-thumping one Sunday in a local mission hall, from a preacher whose name was that of a famous murderer.

Billy Graham's pulpit manner, in fact, reminds an East Londoner of nothing so much as a market cheap-jack's. He talks loud and fast, holding his Bible aloft as if to emphasize its startling value and slapping it with a knocked-down-to-you-madam finality. His approach is that of a man with a wonderful bargain who will nag you into buying it. In one respect, however, he is different from the street salesman and from most orators: instead of working up to his climax, he works down to it. In the last few minutes he became calm, he heeded Hamlet's advice "Do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus"; he talked in a soft, persuasive voice and asked for silent prayer. People bowed their heads, and the organ played softly. It was in this skilfully created atmosphere of churchy calm, of sentiment and "uplift," that he asked the converts and witnesses to come forward.

At first there was only a trickle; it would be uncharitable, but probably correct, to surmise that some at least hoped to encourage others. The trickle grew, until in ten minutes a good three hundred stood in front of the pulpit. They were led away to have their names and addresses taken, presumably because the Crusade knows conversion is likely to be short-lived. There was another hymn, and the meeting was over.

What prompted the three hundred, and their

counterparts on the other nights? Billy Graham claimed, before the meeting ended, that over sixty per cent. of those who came forward were genuine first-timers in religion. What, then, prompted the two hundred? Without doubt it was curiosity for some; possibly, considering the size of Harringay Arena, the desire for a closer look at the preacher. For most of them there are two suggestions to make. The first is sentimentality: the agreeable, maudlin sentimentality that we all indulge on occasions. It is mainly a matter of surroundings and properties; moonlight, babies, cats and dogs and draught beer are notorious stimulants of it; and at the revival meetings, the circumstances for religious sentimentality are organized with scrupulous care. The splendid choir and the rich-toned organ, the soloist's lush crooning, the handsome, fervent preacher and the culminating silence of thousands of people give a feeling of elevation, of being in touch with higher matters, and warm the heart. And that is just what they are meant to do.

Nevertheless, many of the converts undoubtedly are attracted by the appeal which is made from the pulpit. A century ago, preachers could and did attract poor starved creatures in the nineteenth-century industrial abyss with hopeful fantasies of what was astutely nicknamed "pie in the sky when you die." Social circumstances have changed a little since then, and popular consciousness has generally rejected whatever concern it had over heaven and hell. Who asks for pie in the soup-kitchen world of the Welfare State? Most people want this life to be much better—and that is what Billy Graham claims to offer. Peace, happiness, contentment; accept the gospel, and these desirable conditions are yours. It is not surprising that people should be willing to try it, and it *will* be surprising if they have any luck.

But what is Billy Graham's—still more to the point, what is his backers' object? A revivalist, but what is he hoping to revive? He says his first aim is to bring people back into the Churches, but working people in this country have never gone to Church to any extent worth talking about. They went when they were made to, and a minority of them has always been susceptible to "the hope of what is called heaven and the fear of what is called hell"; otherwise they never have participated much in religious observances other than weddings, christenings and funerals.

There is no reason for doubting Graham's sincerity of conviction that his purpose in life must be inducing others to religious belief. It does not follow that his backers are paying out so handsomely to the same end. Probably some of them are; the rich seem to observe religion a little more than the poor, and most people want to see their own beliefs spread. The clergy, too, are anxious to have more people in their Churches. There have, however, been reports of other motives. Mr. Alfred Owen, a wealthy industrialist who is treasurer to the Crusade, asked other businessmen to support it because "the growth of Communism . . . is seeking to infiltrate the whole of our national life." Billy Graham has spoken against Communism in America—"because he thinks it is evil," says Mrs. Graham.

It is curious how many people look on Communism

as an irreligious affair, when contrary evidence is before their eyes. Christianity flourishes under State benefaction in Russia and the "democracies" of Eastern Europe, and the Dean of Canterbury maintains a dual priesthood. Religious belief is always good for the regime (that is why it was not long out of favour in Russia); religious people do not seek to change the world much, and are usually prepared to worship temporal as well as spiritual rulers. Some American and British businessmen are willing to pay for a campaign which promises to confirm people's acceptance of capitalism in the western world; Russia's rulers support religious work for exactly the same reason. Certainly Billy Graham has no objection to capitalism: "There's nothing wrong in being rich," he told his audience at Harringay. It was very surprising, considering his insistence on literal acceptance of the Bible and the Bible's insistence that the rich do not easily enter the kingdom of Heaven.

Yes, religion is still "the opium of the people." even though there are other narcotics for this day and age. Schools still teach prayers before they teach letters, religious observance is still magistrates' criterion of fitness for the care of children. Billy Graham's opium-peddling has had its share of success, and probably will continue to have it. Capitalism makes the world a pretty poor place for most working people, and consequently they are given to grabbing at even remote possibilities of fulfilling their needs. Some buy a shillingsworth of hope in the pools, some live vicariously at the films and the speedways, and some "take it to the Lord in prayer." These, however, are the symptoms and not the cure. And while evangelists are on their knees, while the confused seek comfort in a fable which came (in strict rotation) from primitive man watching his shadow to the medicine man with his painted face, to the temples of the ancient East, to Pythagoras, to Plato, to Jesus if he ever lived—the wicked materialists are learning and telling how mankind's sickness may really be cured.

R. COSTER.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1954

at

CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

on

Friday, Saturday & Sunday, April 16th, 17th, 18th

Proceedings commence each day at 11 a.m.

PUBLIC MEETING

"Socialism and The World Today"

Sunday, April 18th, at 7 p.m.

CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1

Speakers: D. MOSS, L. BRYAN

Chairman: S. GOODMAN

PASSING SHOW

Impossible to decapitate

In England the debate as to whether the Africans are ready for self-government continues to rage. The question as to what the Africans did before Heaven, in its inscrutable mercy, took pity on them and sent the English to rule over them, continues to be ignored. And in Africa, as far as they are allowed, the tribes continue to govern themselves, just as they have done for thousands of years.

A book called "The Akikuyu," by Father Cagnolo, gives valuable information about the political organisation of the Kikuyu people (1-3-54; this and following references are to *The Times*). The book shows that

"The Kikuyu were ruled, not by chiefs but by committees based on age-groups. These were recruited, at the bottom, through the annual circumcision rites and changed, at the top, about once in a generation. This committee-system produces a hydra-headed organisation which it is virtually impossible to decapitate. 'Theirs,' writes Father Cagnolo, 'is a sort of enormous Parliament, of the elder class, drawn from every district. . . . It does not meet as one assembly but in local offshoots, which meet whenever public affairs demand it, or at regular intervals.'"

Where, then, did the so-called Kikuyu "chiefs" come from? The British put them there! The British ruling class, though they boasted that they belonged to a democratic country, did not like the flourishing democracy which they found when they took over Kenya; so they themselves appointed various Africans as chiefs. But the chiefs derived their authority from the British only; the Kikuyu themselves continued to rely on their "committee-system."

Democracy

To say that the political organisation of the Kikuyu is, by all appearances, nearer to democracy than is the British system is not to claim that their system is ideal. Far from it; it has a number of regrettable features. "An indefensible trait of the Kikuyu," says the article, "is their conscious recidivism. Their traditional customs reveal a heavy preoccupation with the slaughter of animals and the ritual aspects of sex." Quite so; but is anyone who supports what is called "Western civilisation" a proper person to assume the role of critic? Dealing only with the last fifty years, an independent observer would be forced to conclude that the behaviour of Western man reveals a heavy preoccupation with the slaughter, not of animals, but of human beings. And what was that about "the ritual aspect of sex?" Here is Western civilisation, saturating itself in pornography, supporting whole industries on a basis of the skilful glamorisation of sex, and paying a girl more for a week of displaying her body in front of cine-cameras than a workman gets in a year; and this is the civilisation which points an accusing finger at a remote African tribe for being "heavily preoccupied with sex!" How blind can one get?

Representatives

But to get back to the question of democracy. When the Kabaka of Buganda was deposed by Mr. Lyttelton, the Lukiko (or Parliament) of the Baganda people sent a delegation to London to protest. The British Government made new proposals to them, and their reply was "as representatives of the Lukiko, we

have no mandate to express our opinion on the proposals made by the Government. We shall report our views to the Lukiko, which will decide what policy will be adopted with regard to this question" (1-3-54). It is hard to imagine European leaders showing a similar restraint. Leaders of a modern capitalist state are only too ready to speak, authorised or not, "on behalf of" any group, class or country. Remembering that democracy is an essential ingredient of Socialism, which is indeed only the application of democracy on the economic field, one is tempted to give a new complexion to an old question, and ask: "Will the Hottentots have to wait for the last European?"

Liberty

Some American leaders have admitted that Spain may seem to be a curious ally for any country which claims to be fighting for liberty against tyranny; but have said that the strategic necessities of the situation demand that Spain should be ranged on the side of the West. But this kind of argument is purely interim; it is employed to reassure all those who were convinced by Western propaganda in the second world war (quite rightly) that Fascism was the embodiment of all tyranny, the negation of all liberty. It can only be an interim argument, because the brutality of modern war is such that the peoples of each side must be whipped up to white heat before they can so far forget their common humanity as to murder each other in the numbers which modern warfare demands. So everyone on "our" side must be depicted as near-angels; everyone on the other side as near-devils. In twentieth-century catchword politics "liberty" is a good word, and "tyranny" a bad; though neither of them is often submitted to the too-rational process of definition. So Spain must be represented as being for the first, and against the second. In California recently the U.S. Government handed over a minesweeper to Spain. Rear-Admiral Dyer said that "in putting her into the hands of the Spanish Navy he was adding to the 'squadron of liberty.'" And the Spanish Ambassador, who replied, assured him that should the danger-signal be given the Spanish sailors "would be at their posts and 'at the side of yours against tyranny'" (19-2-54).

After all, if people could be hoodwinked into believing ten years ago, that Russia was "fighting for liberty," why can't they now be made to believe the same thing about Spain?

Neglect

During the recent cold spell an old man was found dead in his room in St. Pancras. The Deputy-Coroner said that he lived "virtually alone in his room and during the recent spell of cold weather there was no heating there. All the pipes were frozen and he had a window which would not close. 'It is quite clear that the cause of death is frostbite from exposure'" (26-2-54).

And the verdict? Believe it or not, "Death from Self-Neglect."

In this enlightened age, no aged worker need neglect himself. The capitalist system does it for him.

JOSHUA.

WHAT IS RELIGION?—(concluded)

The Economics of Religion

CHRISTIANITY was adopted as the official religion of the Roman Empire by Constantine the Great, because it was thought to be a suitable religion for slaves. It was a "hotch-potch religion," or a "cemetery of dead religions," because when the slaves were brought into Rome from many different lands, they brought with them their many religious ideas. Professor Seeley says, "the age was religious because it was an age of servitude" and the Christian teachings of "blessed are the meek, the humble, and the merciful," fitted very well into needs of society at that time. "Christianity produced a complete change in the attitude to the Emperor. It made their loyalty more intense." (Professor Seeley, lectures and essays page 75.) As the New Testament admirably puts it, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but God; the powers that be are ordained by God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Romans Ch. 13 ver. 1 and 2. The Roman Empire was already in decay when Christianity was ushered in, and it was no coincidence that some spiritual opium was needed to quieten the slaves against revolt.

In the middle ages the church controlled most of the land. This meant that they had a considerable amount of real economic control in their hands, for under feudalism he who controlled the land controlled most of what was on it. Of more recent times we have seen the power of the Catholic political parties in pre-Nazi Germany, Spain, France, Austria, etc. The controlling of education by the Church, and antagonism to divorce, contraception, etc.

When capitalism was beginning to expand, missionaries played a very important part in paving the way for the trade that was to come, and often in a very crude way. The African natives who were discovered in a state of nakedness, were told by the missionaries that God frowned on such things, and that to be a good Christian one should at least cover the genitals. But the natives had no clothes with which to gain the favours of God; they only had bars of Gold, diamonds and ivory tusks. As chance would have it Lancashire had plenty of cheap pants and pyjamas in all the colours of the rainbow which no self-respecting Englishman would wear, not even in bed. Then guess what happened—yes trade started—and no wonder they called it the "Gold Coast." Where the missionaries didn't conduct the trade themselves, it didn't need a lot of imagination for an enterprising trader to follow the missionaries up.

"Look up to Heaven," said the missionary to the native, and the latter did so. When he looked down again he found that his land was appropriated! As the Zulus say "When white man first came to us he had the Bible, and we owned the land. Now he's got the land, and we've got the Bible."

Of recent years Bishops and other church dignitaries have become in some cases fabulously rich, so rich that many have been able to invest thousands of

pounds in armament firms. (See Alan Handsacre "The Revenues of Religion.") In Russia we had many examples of millionaire priests investing sums as large as half a million roubles in Soviet War Bonds. This is strange in a country which not long ago was turning churches into anti-religious museums, and persecuting followers of all religions.

It is often argued that Jesus was a Socialist, and Keir Hardie stated that he learnt his socialism from the New Testament. The idea of the disciples having all things in common gives rise to this misunderstanding. Jesus could only have been a socialist if he and his disciples fished with a steam trawler in an environment in which capitalism had already developed. Nothing that Jesus was alleged to have said, makes him a socialist in any way. The whole essence of his teaching was to tolerate the unpleasant things of life for treasure to come in heaven. His whole teaching and prophecies were based on survival after death. We socialists want to survive before death, and to have our good time in this world which we know that we have to live and work.

There are plenty of arguments against religion, and they come from many angles. Perhaps the chief one is that religion is false, and because of this it discourages people from thinking. Socialism, unlike religion, needs understanding and not just believing. Well did Marx say "the criticism of religion is the beginning of all criticism" for when we come to realise that there is no subject so holy that we must not or dare not criticise, then we begin to look at everything critically and to accept nothing at its face value. Again Marx wrote "For too long has religion explained history, let us with history explain religion!"

H. JARVIS.

Glasgow May Day Rally

SUNDAY, MAY 2nd, at 7 p.m.

McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street

Subject: "The S.P.G.B. and the last 50 years."
(LONDON SPEAKER)

Conference Social and Dance

at

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1

on

SATURDAY, APRIL 17th, at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets 3/-

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FORGET**

DENISON HOUSE ★

"The Socialist Future"

Sunday, April 4th, 7 p.m.

HARD WORK

MANY of the opponents of the Socialist Party of Great Britain often tell us in defence of present-day society, that hard work is the keynote of success in the modern world; and they go on to illustrate this argument with pictorial descriptions of the lives of those wonderful self-made men, within whose illustrious ranks we find Lord Nuffield, Ford, Dawson and Sir Bernard Docker. Indeed to listen to some of our opponents the lives of these men read like Hans Andersen fairy stories.

It is one of the tragedies of life, that many members of the working class cannot see the fallacy in this argument. They believe that they too can emulate the success of that figure of British big business, Mr. George Dawson. They see themselves holidaying on the French Riviera, dining at the Ritz, and driving from place to place in luxury cars.

The reasons for this attitude of mind are not far to find. In almost every facet of our daily lives we are subjected to as intense a barrage of propaganda as could be imagined. The ideas of hard work and success are pumped at us in our newspapers, from the radio and television, and at the cinema; they are as inescapable as death itself.

To a member of the working class, hard work can be guaranteed to bring but one thing, a great desire for rest and sleep. What foundation of success is laid by the man digging a hole in the road? Reaching Australia

perhaps? Does the cotton worker find that hard work breeds success? Far from it. He finds he has worked so hard that he has produced a glut of goods and ended up in the dole queue. For every George Dawson or Lord Nuffield there are millions of men and women whose sweat and energies have entitled them to one thing; a place on the old-age pension register, with the prospect of receiving some paltry weekly sum, which is hardly sufficient to keep them in tobacco, let alone provide the necessities of life.

Hard work offers no solution to the problems of the working class, for the only real solution is the abolishment of the causes of these problems; of war, poverty and insecurity. It is the very nature of society which is to blame—a society which invests the ownership and control of industry upon one section of society and brings the rest to a state of relative poverty. A society where things are produced not for use solely but for sale at a profit. A society which pits man against man and nation against nation, leaving a trail of wars, booms and slumps.

Only when things are commonly owned, when goods are produced only to satisfy the needs and desires of men and women, when wars no longer ravage the face of the earth, when man will really be brother unto man; only then, under Socialism, will man inherit his rightful heritage. Let's work hard for that.

M. GILL.

"AN OLD AGE TRAGEDY"

At election times both the Labour and Conservative parties proudly proclaim that they have been responsible for the establishment of "The Welfare State." This term has been in vogue since the end of the last war and we are told that today it is the health, happiness and well-being of young and old alike that are the first concern of the State.

It is the claim of Socialists that family allowances, health services and insurances, increased old age pensions or public assistance, do not alter the basic position of the working class. Both Tory and Labour administrations have been concerned with maintaining the smooth running of the capitalist system.

Recently the most grandiose claims have been made in connection with old age pensions and services for the elderly. Here for example is a statement made by Mr. A. Bevan speaking in the House of Commons on 17th October, 1948:—

"In very many cases before the war before the nation enjoyed the social services which it has today, large numbers of old people were living in workhouses. Today they are living in the homes in which they have lived throughout their lives. They are insisting on doing so."

Over five years have passed since this statement was made.

Now the conditions under which many of these old people are living under "in their own homes" has been revealed in a number of articles published in the *Manchester Guardian* under the title "Neglect of the

Aged Sick." In its issues of 20th and 24th November, the following information appears.

An incident is related of a Queen's District Nurse who found a woman of 78 in an appalling condition sitting in a chair from which she was unable to move, suffering from delayed shock. She was doubly incontinent and her back from hips to knees was "completely raw with gangrenous sloughing areas." The whole room was "alive with bugs" and "the stench was horrible."

A medical officer in the south of England called upon an old couple in a basement room where he found two old people of about 80. The woman was swollen with dropsy and the man collapsed and helpless. The report relates the doctor's struggle to get them into hospital and the difficulties he encounters in trying to do so, for there are about nine thousand people on the hospital waiting lists, of whom 75% are classified as the "chronic sick." The *Manchester Guardian* points out in its report a number of cases of old people dying alone and uncared for as a result of this. Among them is the story of the recluse whose dead body was only found by his neighbours because of the noise set up by the howling of his starved dogs who had already started worrying the corpse. Perhaps the most supreme example of our highly civilised 20th Century welfare state is that of an old woman found with a bad leg which she carefully wrapped in newspaper. Upon the

(Continued on page 57)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

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SHALL GERMANY RE-ARM?

THE old tragic farce "Shall Germany Re-arm?" that occupied the European stage between the end of World War I and the emergence of Hitlerite Germany, has been revived and is playing to full houses wherever the world's statesmen gather together to discuss peace and war. The revived version is much the same as the old one but some of the actors are playing different roles. In the nineteen-twenties, with Russia out of the running, the near-disarmament of Germany under the Versailles Peace Treaty brought as its consequence the threat of Europe being dominated by French capitalism and its Polish and other allies. So the British and American capitalists had an interest in helping Germany to recover and in this, though for different reasons, they were pursuing the same policy as Russia. The Russian Government took the view that a stronger Germany would curb the power of all the Western capitalist groups. So as late as the end of October, 1939, when Hitlerite Germany was armed to the teeth and was actually at war, Mr. Molotov, who is now furiously denouncing the re-armament of Germany, was still telling the world what a good thing it was that Germany was strong, because "we have always held that a strong Germany is an indispensable condition for durable peace in Europe." He was to discover not long afterwards that the Germany whose re-armament the Russian government had encouraged was to turn those arms against Russia as she had already turned them against Britain and France.

But after World War II Russia faces the western powers with huge armed forces equalled only by those of the U.S.A. So now it is not French expansionism that the other Powers fear. They fear Russia and, despite the obvious risks, they prefer to see Germany re-armed to offset the Russian threat.

The decision is a difficult one for them all since

they can only guess whether German capitalism will in the long run seek to use the West to squeeze the East, or use the East to squeeze the West.

All the West European political parties including the Tories are worried about the problem but above all the British Labour Party. As long ago as 1950 the Labour Government's Foreign Secretary, the late Ernest Bevin, accepted in principle the re-armament of Germany but he did so against the wishes of many Labour M.P.s and their supporters. When the question was voted on in the Parliamentary Labour Party in February, 1954, the Executive secured the passage of its resolution favouring German unity and re-armament and German assistance in the defence of Western Europe, by only 113 votes to 104 (*Daily Herald* 25/2/54). The justification urged for this policy is "fear of Russia," just as, 30 years ago, an earlier Labour Party Executive was using "fear of France" as a reason why the Labour Party should support armaments.

Some of the present spokesmen of the Labour Party have evidently been studying the arguments current at the time of the old controversy. In the nineteen-twenties Mr. Lloyd George used to talk about general disarmament and indeed it was the announced intention of pursuing such a policy that was used by him and others as justification for keeping Germany with strictly limited armed forces. Now it is Mr. Aneurin Bevan who says that "we should be seriously discussing the possibility of universal disarmament" as an alternative to uniting and defending Western Europe (*Sunday Despatch* 14/3/54). It is as unrealistic now as it was then.

In those days disarmament was to come through the League of Nations as now through the United Nations; though already the manifest failure of the latter has led Mr. Attlee to say in a speech to the Oxford University Labour Club: "I think that in our Commonwealth we have something which is really better than the United Nations and something to set an example on how the United Nations should work" (*Daily Telegraph* 23/2/52). It is odd to recall now what were the explanations then given for the failure of the League. The most plausible line was that if only U.S.A. and Russia would join the League and if only the League had power to enforce its decisions all would be well.

Now indeed U.S.A. and Russia are members of United Nations but each pursues a policy of building up huge armaments on the ground that the other is a war maker. And in Korea, where a large scale "United Nations" war was fought, these two Powers were backing the rival armies.

An argument used by Labour Party and other opponents of German re-armament is that the Germans have caused two world wars, are a militarist nation and cannot be trusted. In other words that the Germans are an "inferior race" by comparison with all or some of the others.

In the controversy each national group can state what, in its own estimation, is an unanswerable case. As each group maintains that its own armaments are purely defensive, and as each can provide ample evidence of fiendish barbarities used by other Powers

in war, this is easy. All war is bestial and no nation has a record much less horrifying than any other. The whole argumentation is bedevilled by a blank inability to recognise why capitalism needs arms and why wars occur. The capitalist-minded patriots of all countries denounce the methods used by the others but fail to recognise that they are pursuing the same objectives in the same way. They all seek to control sources of raw materials, seek to invade new markets, and seek strategic bases to protect their territories and trade routes. But each and every one regards its own activities as necessary, lawful and legitimate, and for those who accept capitalism and seek to perpetuate it so they all are. Given a capitalist world Russian attempts to dominate the Dardanelles or seize North Persian oil (as in 1946) have just as much necessity and legitimacy as the British hold on Suez or Abadan or the American control of Panama or oil resources in the Middle East. It is the law of the jungle.

Not recognising this, those who argue superficially

"AN OLD AGE TRAGEDY"—continued from page 55

removal of the paper the leg was found to be infested with maggots.

The article continues—"since the creation of the welfare state, the lot of old people has, in some ways, worsened not improved" and on the question of the shortage of hospital beds quotes with approval the following statement made by an officer of the Queen's Institute of District Nursing—

"This is in contrast to the system previously prevailing whereby the relieving officer would have no difficulty in getting the patient into the workhouses infirmary immediately she was found."

We would not of course suggest that the conditions prevailing in the workhouses in the past have been anything but wretched, but we would ask some of those ardent reformists who talk so glibly of the achievements of the "welfare state" today to bear some of the facts given above in their minds.

The problems of the old people can in no way be separated from the problems of the working class in general. The difficulties that we face as we grow older can only be explained from a poverty that arises directly from the fact that we have to work for others for a wage or salary in order to live. This is not enough to enable us to save any appreciable sum in order to "retire" comfortably. Old age means that we are becoming a burden upon the capitalist system; perhaps we are not quite as efficient as we were in the past and no longer such a profit making asset. It may well be that the reports we have given from the *Manchester Guardian* are concerned with a few of the worst and most outstanding cases, but few workers can face the economic prospects of old age without fear and trepidation.

For the ruling class, however, there is no such problem. They will be able to solve the difficulties of their declining years very easily. For them there is no poverty and therefore no lining up for hospital beds, and they can retire to one of those exclusive nursing homes with exorbitant fees whose advertisements can be seen in all the newspapers or fashionable magazines

about war being caused by American, Russian, British or German aims of world domination allow themselves to be deluded into the belief that aggression is an inherent characteristic of one particular nation or is the outcome of some ideology. It is only necessary to glance at the present trouble spots of the world to see how remote this is from the truth. Is it "ideology" that sets Egyptian capitalism against British at Suez, Russian against Turkish in the Dardanelles, French against Indonesian, Argentine against British over control of territories in the Antarctic, America against Russia in Europe, the Pacific and elsewhere, Israel against the Arab States, India against Pakistan over Kashmir, British against African in Kenya? The list could be enormously extended and the explanation in all cases is that capitalism is by its nature a competitive, expansionist system breeding rivalry, hatred and war. There is no way out of this terrifying threat of continuing wars except by abolishing capitalism and establishing world socialism in its place.

Wealthy people in their latter years far from being lonely are often surrounded by very large numbers of helpful friends who expect "to be remembered in the will."

The elderly worker has always been something of a problem to capitalism. In times of mass unemployment and economic crises they are often regarded by capitalist and worker alike as a hindrance in the struggle for business and for employment. In 1931 Sir Charles Grant Robinson reported by the *Daily Herald* on 2nd October made the following statement:—

"I am not at all sure that one of the best things we can do would not be to take every one over 60 years of age and not necessarily put them into a lethal chamber but kindly and firmly tell them they ought to be on the unemployed shelf."

In modern society the emphasis on dealing with this problem has always been to try and do so in the most cheese-paring and economical way possible. After all the main concern of this industrial, profit making world must be with the younger workers as cannon-fodder for new wars and the wage workers of the future. The Beveridge Report points out that it is dangerous to be lavish with old age until such time as adequate provisions have been made for the young.

The first appearance of old age pensions was itself an economy measure introduced by a Liberal Government in 1909. The maximum sum paid was 5s. per week. Mr. Lloyd George regarded this as an extremely economical position since it cost double this sum to keep an inmate in the workhouse and he expected to save £1,600,000 per annum on the transaction. Most people would do their utmost to exist on however small a sum to save the indignity of entering a workhouse.

In the years since then we have seen the introduction of higher old age pensions, but today in face of higher prices they still remain totally inadequate. We have tried to show in the foregoing remarks that the reforms of the Welfare State have had behind them the same principle as that of Lloyd George in 1909, namely that Capitalism will be able to deal with those work-weary and war-weary workers who have spent them-

selves out in its interest in as an efficient and cheap method as possible.

The problem remains for the elderly, as it does for the majority of workers throughout the world, one of poverty and it can only be solved by the establishment of Socialism which will sweep away the class division from which it arises.

Men and women in the Society of the future will no longer look upon old age with the dread with which we regard it today. In a world in which everybody will be able to receive all the products of society as and when they need them, irrespective of the amount of work they are able to do, the miserable poverty of the old will be banished forever.

No longer will there be the loneliness of old age which is a reflection of the anti-social tendencies that Capitalism throws up, for under Socialism the never ceasing struggle which pits worker against worker and capitalist against capitalist will no longer exist. Instead the harmonious relationships which must arise from common ownership of the means of production will permeate our dealings with one another and instead of being without interest in our neighbours we shall be more interested in them as members of the human

brotherhood.

Indeed the whole idea of retirement arises from a world in which employment is regarded as a necessary evil, but in the future with the production of goods for use, the people of the world will work for the sheer love and pleasure of doing so, part of the instincts of man as a creative animal. The old will no longer be regarded by the young as a burden standing in the way of their future who ought to be "pensioned off." We are certain that the majority of people will take pleasure in adding, if only in some slight degree, to the joint productive efforts of society as long as they are able. If we look around us today it is easy to find the old age pensioner who has long since become mentally dead owing to the fact that he cannot find any interest in life now that his work, even under Capitalism, is now over. In the society of the future if people became too old or feeble to wish to work they will receive all the attention they require. Only under Socialism can it be said that there is no division between young or old any more than there is for male or female or black or white, because every individual will be the responsibility of the whole of society.

D. A. MOSS.

ABOUT BOOKS

IN 1952 Victor Gollancz, Ltd., published that excellent book by Josué de Castro, "The Geography of Hunger." In the early chapters Mr. de Castro points out that, although there have been innumerable books on the subject of war, that other great human tragedy, hunger, has seldom called forth a book. He lists for us the few books on the subject; the novels "Hunger" by Hamsun and "The Grapes of Wrath" by Steinbeck; Istrati describing his experiences in Rumania, George Fink in the suburbs of Berlin, and Felekov and Neverov describing hunger in Russia. That is Mr. de Castro's complete catalogue.

There is now another, a most excellently written book, that can be added to the list. "The People of the Deer" by Farley Mowat, published by Michael Joseph in 1952 at 15s., with drawings by S. Bryant and maps.

Farley Mowat developed what he terms "the disease of the arctic," which is a longing to spend his time in the wide open spaces of the Canadian North West Territory. He learned of a little-known group of Eskimos who occupied the inland somewhere west of Hudson Bay and he decided to find them. Others had set out on a similar expedition before him and had perished in "The Barrens," that terrifying territory north of the Canadian timber line and west of the Hudson.

Mr. Mowat made his first trip alone, contacting an old trader who had hung on in the inland country and getting to know the few remaining Eskimos of the Ihalmiut people. After a brief interval of a few months back in Southern Canada, Mr. Mowat returned to the Ihalmiut Eskimos in 1948 with a student of zoology, a Mr. Andrew Lawrie, as his companion. He set to work

to learn the language and to study the history and customs of these people.

The story of these northern people is a tragedy. It tells of a once comparatively numerous people reduced by 1951 to about forty individuals. Mr. Mowat tells how, winter after winter, during the past fifty or sixty years, the ranks of these lovable folk have been decimated by starvation and disease—starvation and disease that was unknown till white men in search of profits probed their way into the northern lands.

These people live entirely by the caribou: they eat it, clothe themselves from its skin and build their lives around it and its habits. For generations they have hunted it for its meat, its fat, its bone, its horn, its hide and its fur. Without it they die, but in the days when the vast herds of these deer roamed their land there was little fear of dying from that cause.

The Ihalmiut have few possessions but no man claims exclusive ownership of even the tools of his own creation. Their tools, weapons and boats are the work of skilled craftsmen and they were once wonderful hunters. They hunted the caribou, killing just enough to supply their requirements.

Then came the white man in search of furs. The Eskimos were contacted and offered rifles, ammunition, kettles, tobacco and a variety of knick-knacks in exchange for furs. They gave up hunting the caribou in favour of the white fox, they laid aside their spears in favour of rifles, they gave up their deer meat in favour of white flour and tinned food. Things went well for years. Then the 1914-1918 war killed the fur market. The traders withdrew from their northerly stations and when the Eskimos trekked south with their furs they found the traders' huts empty. They couldn't

understand it. They waited thinking the white man must come back, he still must need the furs.

When the worst of the winter weather was on them the Eskimos had plenty of furs but no ammunition for their rifles. They had lost the art of their primitive form of hunting. They had reduced their resistance to the cold by eating food of the white men instead of deer meat and fat. They had contracted white men's diseases and they died by the hundred.

This story was repeated between the wars. When the fur trade boomed the traders went north with the weapons and gew-jaws to exchange with the simple people who were prepared to obey their every wish. When trade slumped, without warning the traders left and the Eskimos died. This is a sorry story of the effect of capitalism when it comes in contact with primitive people. The rifle and the demand for furs urged the eskimos to kill in excess of their living needs and the hordes of caribou have become as decimated as the

people themselves. The caribou is in danger of passing away like the buffalo of the American plains.

If there are any of these people left in 1954, and if they are ever rescued from their plight, the solution of capitalism will be to either provide charity or to use them to work to produce wealth for exploiters. If it is a matter of helping them to re-adapt themselves to their environment, and there is no profit to be made in the process—well, maybe some charitable organisation will lend a hand. Or, more likely, as Mr. Mowat indignantly tells us, excuses will be made for doing nothing about them.

In addition to presenting us with this interesting sociological work Mr. Mowat is a first class author and his writing makes his book enthralling. He has neglected no aspect of study of the Ihalmiut people and he kept our noses glued to the pages of his book till we reached page 316 and the final word.

W. WATERS.

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY—7

The Paris Commune

WHILST crowds lined the streets of London to watch Queen Victoria pass on her way to open the Albert Hall, on Tuesday, March 28th, 1871, the streets of Paris were lined with denser and more exuberant crowds. Around Paris was camped the German army of Prince von Bismarck with a young lieutenant Hindenburg amongst his officers. On the previous Sunday Paris had been to the polls and on this Tuesday the results had been declared. Now, with a predominantly working-class Commune, the Parisians were jubilant and staged a monster procession.

Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, nephew of the great Napoleon I, who had made himself Napoleon III of France, had embarked on a war with Prussia, mainly in an endeavour to revive his failing prestige. His war had been unsuccessful and after defeats at Saarbrücken, Weissenburg and Metz, Louis Napoleon surrendered to the Prussians at Sedan on September 2nd, 1870. The French armies were held prisoners in Germany and at Metz. On the 4th of September Paris rebelled and proclaimed a republic. A collection of lawyers, professional politicians, careerists and job hunters constituted themselves a Government of National Defence and, although the Prussians were at the gates of Paris, this government proposed to offer resistance. Behind the scenes it prepared to capitulate.

On the 28th January, 1871, Paris, starved out, capitulated, its fortifications were disarmed and the weapons of the regular troops were handed over to the enemy. But, within Paris there was a military organisation known as the National Guard, a voluntary defence organisation composed mainly of members of the working class. This National Guard retained its weapons and cannons and entered into a truce with the Prussians. The troops of Bismarck who had besieged Paris for 131 days and were now prepared to occupy it, found that the workers of Paris would only allow them to occupy certain small sections of the city and, in those sections, they were virtually prisoners.

The Government of National Defence resigned and

on February 8th a National Assembly was elected at Bordeaux. This assembly almost unanimously elected a M. Thiers as head of the executive power. Thiers saw the danger that an armed working-class presented to French capitalism and made plans to disarm the Parisian National Guard.

He sent General Lecomte with troops to sneak away the cannon that the National Guard had purchased with its own subscriptions, claiming that these cannon were state property. The plan was to get the guns away before the people of Paris realised what was happening, but the scheme went awry. The people came out of their houses and surrounded the troops, offering them coffee and breakfast until finally the troops fraternised with the workers handing their rifles into the crowd in exchange for glasses of wine. In all parts of Paris the attempt to steal the guns had failed. Paris was now up in arms against the Thiers government seated at Versailles.

A Central Committee of the National Guard, elected without distinction of rank, from the various companies, took over the control of affairs in Paris and set about the job of maintaining distribution of what food and supplies were available and seeing to the general running of the city. This committee firmly met the opposition of the city mayors and other pro-government elements until it stood down in favour of the newly elected Commune.

The Commune got straight to work. On February 30th, it decreed the abolition of the standing army and conscription and declared that only the National Guard, to which all citizens should belong, might bear arms. The rents of all dwellings were remitted from October 1870 to April 1871 and if rent for that period had been paid it was to be deducted from future payments. Pawnshops were stopped from selling pledges. All foreigners elected to the Commune were confirmed in their jobs, it being claimed that "the flag of the Commune is that of the Universal Republic."

On April 1st it was decided that no member of

the Commune, nor any of its functionaries, should receive a wage or salary higher than 6,000 francs a year—a workman's wage. On the following day the Commune disestablished the church, stopped payments from public funds for church purposes and decided to confiscate all ecclesiastical property on behalf of the people.

During the next few weeks Judges and other judicial functionaries were brought under the control of the Commune, so was the police force; the guillotine was publicly burnt; night work for bakers was abolished; Pawn shops were closed; Napoleon Bonaparte's triumphal column at Place Vendome, which was "a symbol of chauvinism and mutual hatred amongst nations," was overthrown and a chapel, built in expiation of the execution of Louis XVI, was destroyed.

Plans were prepared to organise a federation of co-operative societies into which working men were to be enrolled with a view to taking over and managing those factories and workshops that had been closed by the employers. Educational facilities were made available to all and many outstanding grievances were remedied.

The Commune was composed mainly of working men who made of it a working, and not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time. With only workmen's wages to be earned all the political sharks and job seeking racketeers who had previously occupied the administrative posts, faded from the picture and working men took their places.

Whilst the Commune was passing its various enactments the Thiers government at Versailles was preparing to suppress the rebellious city. Attacks had been made since the early days of April, in fact the city was under shell fire whilst the Commune was sitting. Thiers persuaded Bismarck to release French troops taken prisoner during the war so that an army could be built to march on Paris. During April and early May thousands of the Parisians were taken prisoner by the Versailles and subjected to revolting atrocities. Thousands more were killed.

On Sunday, May 21st, the newly formed Versailles army marched into Paris through five breaches in the defences. The workers of Paris threw up barricades and fought like tigers.

"Let good citizens arise! To the barricades! The enemy is within our walls. No hesitation. Forward, for the Commune and for liberty. To arms!"

"Let Paris bristle with barricades, and from behind these improvised ramparts still hurl at her enemies her cry of war, of pride, of defiance, but also of victory; for Paris with her barricades is inexpugnable."

(Two proclamations of May 22nd, quoted by Lissagaray in his "History of the Commune of 1871.")

The government troops fought their way through the city inflicting great slaughter and destroying buildings. By the following Sunday, May 28th, the Parisians were defeated, the Commune was gone and most of its members were dead. When the city was subdued the Thiers government took its revenge.

"And now the murder of defenceless men, women and children, which had raged the whole week through in ever-increasing proportions, reached its highest point. The breechloader no longer killed fast enough; the conquered were slaughtered in hundreds with the mitrailleuses; the 'wall of the Federals' in the Pere la Chaise cemetery,

where the last massacres took place, remains to-day a dumb but eloquent witness to the frenzy of the crime of which the governing classes are capable as soon as the proletariat dares to stand up for its rights. Then, as the slaughter of all was seen to be impossible, came the arrests en masse, the shooting down of arbitrarily selected prisoners as victims for sacrifice, and the transference of the remainder into great camps, where they awaited the mercy of the courts-martial."

(F. Engel's introduction to "The Civil War in France," by Karl Marx.)

The "Wall of the Federals" was the wall against which one hundred and forty seven of the Communards were lined up and shot in cold blood on May 28th, 1871. Every Whit Sunday workers of Paris march and lay wreaths against this wall.

"Twenty-five thousand men, women and children killed during the battle or after; three thousand at least dead in the prisons, the pontoons, the forts, or in consequence of maladies contracted during their captivity, thirteen thousand seven hundred condemned, most of them for life; seventy thousand women, children and old men deprived of their natural supporters or thrown out of France; one hundred and eleven thousand victims at least. This is the balance-sheet of the bourgeois vengeance for the solitary insurrection of the eighteenth of March."

"What a lesson of revolutionary vigour given to the working men. The governing classes shoot in a lump without taking the trouble to select hostages. The vengeance lasts not an hour; neither years nor victims appease it; they make of it an administrative function, methodical and continuous."

(Lissagaray's "History of the Commune of 1871.")

It is easy, today, to see the faults of the Communards but we must not lose sight of the fact that they were not Socialists. Very few of them had more than a feeling of working-class solidarity, with an urgent desire to do something to remedy the evils of their day. If all their reforms had been fully operated capitalism would still have held sway, although with a different complexion.

Nevertheless, the Paris Commune stands as an heroic landmark in the history of the working-class and gives us an indication how workers can act when called upon to re-organise society.

Books to read:—

"Civil War in France," by Karl Marx.

"History of the Commune of 1871," by Lissagaray.

"The Paris Commune of 1871," by Frank Jellinek.

"The Paris Commune," by V. I. Lenin.

"The Paris Commune," by E. S. Mason.

Selected Chapters in:

"The State and Revolution," by Lenin.

"Terrorism and Communism," by K. Kautsky.

"Defence of Terrorism," by L. Trotsky.

"Vital Problems in Social Evolution," by A. M. Lewis.

W. WATERS.

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THE CHINESE ADVANCE

SOCIALISM is impossible—at any rate not for generations because of the mass of backward people in such places as Asia who are incapable of understanding class warfare and socialism and would therefore render the advent of such a society impossible." Such a viewpoint which is held by a number of those otherwise sympathetic to the socialist cause discourages them from working for the establishment of this new society which seems to them too far distant to be practical politics. We can readily agree that Socialism, being an international system of society, requires the support of the mass of the workers of the world for its success. But peoples who are brought within the orbit of the Western world absorb present day mental attitudes and techniques at a speed truly amazing. The largest national group in Asia is the Chinese, who according to the census taken last June number 525 millions. It might be illuminating if we take a peep through the bamboo curtain at, say, just one aspect of society there to see if development compares with that of the West.

A Chinese Film

Such an opportunity presented itself when the Chinese film "The White-haired Girl" was shown at The Scala, London, and at a limited number of other cities throughout the Country.

Cinema-going can be a depressing experience owing to the average run of shows being so mediocre, even though there are films made which could be regarded as competent and therefore of fair entertainment value. Once in a while a film stands out as a masterpiece—such a one is "The White-haired Girl."

The film was adapted from the opera of the same name and is based on a legend from modern China during the course of the recent change of regime there. For a Chinese audience it epitomises a story occurring in real life only too frequently. The scene opens with the peasants harvesting in the sweltering heat of a Chinese summer. Despite the idyllic beauty of the countryside there is a threat hanging over their heads—if they are unable to repay the loans contracted during the year the lender, who is also the largest landowner as is usual in that country, is liable to distraint on their belongings including their winter clothing. How well the Chinese audiences realise the significance of all this! To try to brave the biting cold of a Chinese winter without suitable clothing is equivalent to a sentence of death. In vain one old man tries to stop his daughter from overworking, for she is engaged to be married and has the additional expense of getting a home together. After lunch the engaged couple wander off for a short while and a charming love scene takes place—charming because of its restraint and sincerity.

There is a scene on the threshing floor which graphically demonstrates the exploitation of the rural people. This is constantly demonstrated in similar scenes in real life in China. This is of especial interest because exploitation in our industrial society is camouflaged by the wages system. The landlord's large proportion of the grain is measured out contrasting with

the pitiful remainder as the farmer's reward for a year's toil. The rewards of arduous toil are insufficient to meet the landlord's demands and he asks for the girl in lieu of repayment. The father's misery provides a poignant moment of the film and is acted with transcendent skill. On New Year's eve she falls asleep on his shoulder. He gently replaces her on the bed, kisses her, then restraining his bursting tears goes in the snow to the landlord's house and poisons himself on the threshold. He had hoped by this gesture to shame the landlord out of his bargain but it was in vain. The landlord comes next day—in China it is customary to settle debts by the New Year—and takes the girl to his home. Much to his chagrin she is taken over by the autocratic mother—a commonplace character in many families in China despite the apparently lowly place that women appear to have—for service in the women's quarters as a slave. However, the landlord manages to violate her in the end. With the aid of another servant, her fiancé helps her to escape, is foiled in the attempt and fleeing the district, joins up with the Red Army. Eventually he becomes the leader of a detachment and later, when the Reds have conquered the area, is sent back to his own village to enforce the new land distribution laws. Meanwhile the girl becomes pregnant and, helped by another servant escapes to a nearby mountain cave. There in a scene marked by exquisite delicacy she gives birth to her baby. It dies. Her hair turns white.

Sleeping in the cave she lives off wild berries and plants eking this out by stealing the offerings from a lonely Buddhist temple and with her white hair becomes a legend in the neighbourhood. The landlord in order to distract the attention of the newly arrived Reds from his own short-comings, deliberately fires a house in the village and blames the white-haired apparition. The Red detachment goes off to probe this tale and the long-lost lovers are dramatically reunited.

The landlord is judged by The People's Court, composed of villagers, who assemble and listen to the girl's charges against the landlord. Unable to control their passion the villagers try to lynch him but the Red Army officer insists on law and order. So the case proceeds according to the letter of the law. The accused is sentenced to death, and his land distributed to the peasants.

Here you see a fair replica of a scene that was enacted in many villages throughout China when captured by the Red Army.

Dramatic Art in Post-War China

A rapid expansion and development of dramatic art took place in the Mongol Dynasty of the 13th century although more rudimentary performances were known over the preceding 2,000 years.

The displacement of civil servants by Mongol and other foreigners during this period and the discontinuance of the classical examinations for the civil service relieved the educated from their preoccupation with classical literature, hitherto essential for the examinations, and thus freed them to write novels and plays.

A further literary renaissance coinciding with the founding of the Republic in 1911 also included dramatic art.

The standard of acting on the Chinese stage is very high—it has to be—for the production has not the assistance from stage scenery or effects. In this respect it resembles the Elizabethan stage. Their plays would be called operas in this country for the words are sung to music provided by an orchestra. This development from the opera was demonstrated in the film where the words were sung to an orchestral background. Percussion instruments which underline and emphasize the important lines in the traditional Chinese opera were absent in the music for this film while the haunting Chinese melodies composed in the western idiom revealed the influence of Western capitalism.

"The White-haired Girl" is more directly derived from the Yang-ko, a traditional village fertility folk dance. During the war against Japan this popular entertainment was developed and changed to meet the needs of Communist Party propaganda designed for a population who, not being able to read, were unable to be indoctrinated with the written word. Various specific characters were introduced. After the villagers had joined in, the dance troupe would present a play.

WORK, WELFARE AND WAGES

THERE is a glossy and expensive technical magazine called "Mass Production." Probably you don't read it—which is a pity, because there is a lot written in it about you. But you may not appreciate this at first, because you are referred to as "it," and "it" is human labour.

In the March issue of "Mass Production" is an article by "Commentus" entitled "Work, Welfare and Wages," which deals with problems of incentives and labour-management relationships. It is written (as, indeed, is the whole publication) from the point of view of management, and when "Commentus" writes "we" he means those who are looking after the employers' interests. He questions "the value of attempts to foster the family spirit in the families." The homely phrase "human-touch personnel technique" is used in connection with this family spirit, and it is really not surprising that "Commentus" finds that such calculated bonhomie doesn't fool anyone. Plaintively he asks "Even if the managing director condescends to wear a carnival hat at the get-together party, does it really encourage the chaps in the factory to greater effort?"

"Then there is the alleged subtle attempt at production boosting by giving people the line that their work is of social significance. No doubt it is—but most people will go on thinking (if they think about it at all) that the firm is in business to make money and not for the benefit of the community. That the community does in fact benefit is not relevant unless the firm was started from purely altruistic motives—which is highly improbable! Likewise, talk about their part in the firms' achievements makes very few of the workers swell with pride. They have a rooted idea that the firm is in business to make money—the actual product is in a sense only a by-product."

And so we see that the much-discussed theories of harmonious relationships in industry have failed to measure up to the realities of capitalist production. Despite the lines that are given them, workers can't get rid of the "rooted" idea that the firm is in business

The film demonstrates these diverse influences and also shows clearly the impact of capitalist ideology, as represented by the Land Reform Laws imposed on the old traditional social set-up of the landlord's village.

The action in the drama and the spoken passages are realistic and probably owe more to Western theatre than to Chinese opera. But as China has adopted capitalism and successfully assimilated it until now it appears to be somewhat of a Chinese variety of capitalism, so it seems that Chinese dramatic and musical artistes have been able to absorb the technique of western capitalism yet still produce a film which is essentially and completely Chinese.

"The White-haired Girl" demonstrates what is possible when the high level of culture and dramatic sensibilities and revolutionary fervour of the Chinese are harnessed to the technical knowledge of the West.

The Chinese film industry have equalled if not beaten Hollywood at what is usually considered to be its own game and in so doing perhaps indicate that the dismal Jeremiahs may be holding a mistaken view of the alleged slow pace of development of the fresh arrivals in our modern society.

F. OFFORD.

to make money. Perhaps the roots of this idea lie in the fact that firms *do* make money. In any case, wage claims are being pressed, and it seems that false substitutes are less and less likely to be accepted.

Comparisons with American productivity are becoming more frequent, and talk of high-wage paying Capitalism in this country is increasing in technical circles. If higher wages are to be paid then the employers will do all they can to ensure that no appreciable inroads will be made into profits. To achieve this more mechanisation will be carried out; fewer operatives but more technicians will be employed. "Commentus" writes:

"It should provide both cheaper products and higher wages—not to mention profits! But will the mere button-pushers, although in clean, comfortable surroundings, then complain of the monotony of their effortless task?"

It would be a very disturbing thing indeed if the "mere button-pushers" did not do very much more than just complain. It would indicate that they had been fully transformed into appendages of machines and instruments of capital. If this is the price to pay for higher wages, then workers may well reconsider whether they are aiming at the right target. All the family spirit, hygiene and welfare measures that could be devised could not compensate for such loss of humanity.

Are these the sort of "improved" conditions that can be expected from Capitalism? If they are, then socialists want no part of them. People are not instruments for purposes outside themselves—they are less than human to the extent that they submit to being just another commodity in the world of capital. Only Socialism will abolish their commodity status and make them *whole* men and women.

S.R.P.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Conference, 1954. The Annual Conference is being held as usual at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, during the Easter week-end, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 16th, 17th and 18th. Proceedings commence each morning at 11 a.m. Several interesting items are on the Agenda and members are urged to attend promptly so that work can run smoothly and leave ample time for discussion. The Central Branch Secretary will be present and will welcome Branch members and needless to say will be happy to collect dues.

* * *

Social and Dance. This will be held in the Conway Hall on the Saturday, tickets (3s.) will be available from Branch Secretaries. A good band has been engaged and the Central Organiser and Social Committee are doing their best to ensure a good evening—it is up to members and friends to arrive early and enjoy themselves.

* * *

Australia. A Central Branch member has returned from a visit to Melbourne and was very grateful for the hospitality he received from the S.P.A. Secretary, Comrade C. Saunders and his wife. He would particularly like to thank them for the farewell party they gave him. He is certain that if any members should be in that part of the World, they would receive a "hearty welcome, advice and assistance from both Mr. and Mrs. Saunders." Two sympathisers, one a school teacher and the other a scientist were introduced to the Saunders' and were proposing to join the Party.

* * *

Denison House meetings have been successfully run by Paddington Branch during the winter months and it is hoped to give a full report on the series after the final meeting is held on April 4th.

P.H.

Will anybody interested in forming groups or seeking any other information about groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office (52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4).

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN APRIL

Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.

Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.

Hyde Park, 6 p.m.

Sundays: White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11.30 a.m.

East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.

Hyde Park, 3 p.m.

Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

Notice To All Members

MAY DAY

Literature arrangements, Sunday, May 2nd.

There will be two distribution points at which literature can be obtained and returned at the times stated below.

Charing Cross Underground Station,

Villiers Street entrance: 12.30 p.m.—2.30 p.m.

Connaught Place off Edgware Road,

100 yards from Marble Arch: 2 p.m.—5.30 p.m.

Members who collect literature from Charing Cross may return their sales at Connaught Place, should they decide to sell along the Procession route.

The Trades Council procession leaves the Embankment at 2 p.m. and reaches Hyde Park at approximately 3.30 p.m.

Members are urged to co-operate and give all the assistance they can.

Our Hyde Park meeting will commence at approximately 3.45 p.m. and finish at 6 p.m.

The Conway Hall meeting will commence at 7 p.m. sharp and terminate at 9.30 p.m. sharp.

These activities need your full support.

CENTRAL ORGANISER.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.

Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Exmouth Market.

Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.

Thursdays: Tower Hill.

Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

ISLINGTON BRANCH DISCUSSION

"Socialism and Music"

Thursday, 8th April, 8 p.m.

Griffin.

"Scientific Method"

Thursday, 22nd April, 8 p.m.

Warlow.

Co-op. Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road.

ISLINGTON PUBLIC MEETING

"China Today"

Wednesday, 14th April, 8 p.m.

F. Offord.

Islington Central Library,

68, Holloway Road, N.7.

CROYDON BRANCH LECTURES

The following lectures will be given at Ruskin House, Wellesley Road, Croydon (near W. Croydon Station), at 8 p.m.:—

Wed. April 7th "God and gods" H. Jarvis.

Wed. April 21st "Causes of War" E. Hardy.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

DUNDEE GROUP.—Meets Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at Woodworker's Hall, Coupar's Aulay, Wellgate. Correspondence to P. G. Cavanagh, c/o. above address.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7825 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 7th and 21st April, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 85, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 57, Fareham Avenue, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets alternate Thursdays from 8th April at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd. (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmers Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Grisley, 47, Eastbourne Grove, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month 7.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopton. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to D. Deutz, 21, Kenilworth Gardens, Seven Kings, Essex.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. "Franelle," Rawreth Lane, Rawreth, Shot. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1, 1st and 3rd Thursdays (1st and 15th April) Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 25 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., H. C. Langston, 99, Rommany Road, West Norwood, S.E.27.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Rankin House, Wollsey Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea. **Fulham** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6 Koppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 12th and 26th April, at 8 p.m., in St Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Mondays at 8 p.m. at the Co-op Hall, 197 Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Iveney 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Illington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. C. Rowan, 39, Ellington Street, Barnsbury, N.7.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec., 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. 9 Vicarage Rd, Kingston (opp. Bentalls).

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushley Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 6th and 20th April George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Denison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 597 Vol. 50 May, 1954

What To Do About The H-Bomb

GODS WITH HEADS OF CLAY

THE PROBABLE CONSEQUENCES of using the hydrogen bomb as an act of war must now be familiar to everyone. The newspapers, screens and radio have given enough facts and pictures of the latest tests to leave us in no doubt about the "progress" that has been made in the development of atomic weapons since the days of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

SOME NOTES ON PARTY HISTORY

Almost as often as we hear descriptions of the tremendous destructive power of these weapons, we hear a demand to "ban" them. That revulsion at the prospects is widespread cannot be doubted—only the form and direction of this revulsion is questionable. Often the grave issues involved are reduced to a question that seems to ask no more than "Are you for or against the Bomb?" Yet the question and the answer are made meaningless by the fact that no one *wants* the hydrogen bomb to be used, not even those who are in favour of carrying on war with the "conventional" weapons.

PENSIONS AND POVERTY

Everyone wants peace, and most would like to believe the prediction of the physicist Hans Thirring that settling international disputes by killing as many enemies as possible is about to become outdated. But the work of making and developing the destructive power of these weapons continues. In order to study this whole question seriously we must look beyond the banner headlines and the more emotional than reasoned appeals to "Stop the Bomb!"

MYTHS ABOUT MARXISM

* * *

THE MYTH OF RACE

We live in a world in which the possession of property and the protection of property institutions is the dominating feature. Inseparable from Capitalism is the capitalist state, the machinery which governs the countless individual acts of exploitation and which can, as in Russia, actually constitute the exploiting agent. The state is *power* and, whether democratic or dictatorial, holds sway by virtue of having force at its command—armed force, the purpose of which is safeguarding capitalist property and the prosecution of war against economic rivals when other methods of settling disputes over markets, trade routes and sources of raw materials fail.

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The hydrogen bomb is merely the most efficient way known at present of carrying out this purpose. It is often said that the tremendous destructive power of such weapons will act as a deterrent to their use. There is no reason to believe that it need be any such thing. It could reasonably have been predicted that the last war would cost millions of lives, yet no such prediction was allowed to interfere with the prosecution of the war.

The childlike faith in the argument that atomic weapons must continue to be made and developed so that the certainty of retaliation would stop an "aggressor" using them is foolish and dangerous. It amounts to saying that we must have the hydrogen bomb in order that hydrogen bombs won't be used. It is difficult to think of any other sphere in which such fallacious reasoning would be seriously entertained. If a scientist were to announce that he was breeding rabbits in order that rabbits would be abolished, he would be looked upon askance. And if he were to produce a breed of super-rabbit which could multiply much faster than the ordinary kind, and then claimed that the danger of rabbits was lessened, he would probably be certified.

One of the more hopeful aspects of this ghastly business is that many of the ideas that used to be advanced to make it seem "not so bad after all" are becoming more and more untenable. As Earl Nelson wrote in the *News of the World* (28.3.54):

"The inhabitants of large cities are being prepared for civil defence against bomb attack, but since a single hydrogen bomb could blast a city such as London, New York, Paris, Berlin or Moscow off the face of the earth the only benefit of civil defence would appear to be keeping up the morale of the population prior to their annihilation."

It is clear from what has been said and written on this subject by people who otherwise hold widely differing opinions that all stand aghast at the prospects opened up by the development of the hydrogen bomb. Every "authoritative" article, every school-room meeting, all the pub and club talk is avowedly in opposition to atomic warfare. Yet it cannot be disputed that the two vast camps into which the world is at present divided are arming against each other. Each side is afraid lest the might of the other is bigger, and neither is likely to abandon any strategic advantage it may have or see the chance of having.

What does the ordinary working man think about all this, he who is content to give power to politicians and to bemoan the consequences? He doesn't want to drop a hydrogen bomb on anyone. In past wars he was persuaded to take up arms to protect his hearth and home, his poor old mum, or his violable sister. Such arguments cannot be used today (not that they were valid when they were used) because it is quite obvious that bombs capable of destroying cities don't protect civilians. He has to be given another line—another phoney reason for killing his fellow-men. He feels his powerlessness as an individual lost in a group. He is therefore persuaded to recognise himself as an instrument of that group, to make its "cause" his "cause."

The groups which stand out today as most likely to be adversaries in a future war (it is never safe to predict the actual line-up) are the "Communist World" versus the "Free World." To make it easy for you to follow this deadly game, they mark the shirts "East" and "West." All that is needed now is the patriot and his propaganda. He doesn't have to be a politician—there is always the lurking suspicion that politicians have an axe to grind. Let a famous author

and dramatist such as Charles Morgan explain "our" dilemma as nicely as possible:

"Because everything that we value in Western civilisation, including Christianity, is threatened from the East, we cannot abandon the use of the atomic bomb for the purpose of defence . . ."

"This is the great paradox to which we have been driven. A man of good will who loathes war and, above all, the use of the H-bomb . . . to destroy his fellow-creatures cannot reject them as defence and deterrent."

And there we have the justifying lie in all its subtlety. Robert Briffault once said that if a lie has power it will be bloody and murderous. This latest and most heinous offender against humanity is the assertion that atomic weapons can be used to defend—that is, to ward off, resist, protect or maintain against an attack. They cannot. They can only destroy.

There is nothing paradoxical in what Morgan writes, unless it is his claim to be of good will. The man who cannot reject the use of bombs as deterrent cannot reject the burning, maiming and blasting of his fellow-men. He cannot reject the property relationships which set men at each other's throats and which are always seeking to perfect the means of mutual—but "defensive" destruction.

* * *

The socialist argues that it is senseless to imagine that the problem of war will be solved by advocating the banning of this or that weapon, or even of all weapons. Sir Hartley Shawcross was near the mark when he said that it was no use pretending that a treaty made in advance would make countries obey the rules of war as if it were a game of cricket. The only solution to the problem of war is the removal of its cause—the property basis of society.

Let us make our position quite clear. We have no objection to the banning of hydrogen bombs. But we do have an objection to people getting killed by other methods also. Our cry is not, therefore, "Ban the H-Bomb!" Carry this a stage farther. There is no objection to banning all war. But, even assuming that this aspect of present society could be changed without changing its whole basis (and there is no reason to suppose that this is possible), it would still leave unsolved the other problems of poverty and insecurity which also take toll of human life and happiness.

All of the separate cries to end this or that social evil in the world today add up to the cry to end Capitalism. The singling out of objects "for immediate attention" may claim the merit of moderation, but it is tragically inefficient in obtaining results. To treat each symptom separately—"Ban this Boil!", "Abolish that Pimple!"—is to let the patient go on suffering from a disease which only a revolutionary change can cure.

S.R.P.

GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

SOME NOTES ON PARTY HISTORY

THE meetings of the Provisional Executive Committee were concerned with all the arduous spadework involved in starting an organisation literally from scratch. The Party members had nothing but knowledge and enthusiasm; no office, no literature, no meeting places, no organisational system and no funds. All the plans had to be made and the bricks gathered to build a structure that would serve as a jumping-off ground. There were few members with time to do the work; all committees and sub-committees were made up by ringing the changes on members from the same small group. In the circumstances what they accomplished was astonishing, and a tribute to their energy.

For a long time there was no central office and the E.C. used to meet fortnightly in a room at the Communist Club in Charlotte Street.

At the first meeting of the Executive Committee, after the Inaugural Meeting, it was reported that the following branches had been formed: Islington, Battersea, Wood Green and Paddington. A committee of four was appointed to organise the membership into branches, and another committee of three to consider and report on the question of a Party journal.

As the new party had come into existence without literature of its own a list of pamphlets was drawn up and sent to branches with the recommendation that they confine themselves to this literature for the present.

The E.C. were not happy about some of the pamphlets on the list but they had a limited choice. Members and speakers were complaining about how frustrating it was to hold meetings and have no literature to distribute explaining the Party's views. The titles of some of these pamphlets sound rather curious now. Here is the list:—

- "Socialism and the Worker," George.
- "Wage Labour and Capital," Marx.
- "Socialism and Radicalism," Aveling.
- "No Compromise," Liebnick.
- "The Social Revolution," Kautsky.
- "How I became a Socialist," Morris.
- "Jones Boy," Spokeshave.
- "Commune of Paris," Marx.
- "Socialism and Drink," Russell Smart.
- "The Meaning of Socialism," Widdup.

A Committee was appointed to draw up a Manifesto to the working class of Great Britain and a Manifesto to the Second International; Reeves were to be approached to see if they would dispose of the copyright of the Communist Manifesto. In due course Reeves replied that the Communist Manifesto was still in print and they had no intention of selling the copyright.

It was decided that Party letter headings must have the Object of the Party printed on them but the selection of address to be used as Central Office was left to the General Secretary. The latter decision was unavoidable because the address had to be wherever

the General Secretary was lodging for the time being. As he was almost penniless he had a habit of moving frequently.

Finally Kautsky was to be approached about permission to translate the Erfurt Programme. We will have more to say about this later.

At the second meeting of the Executive, on the 25th June, arrangements were made for a series of mass meetings to be held in different parts of London for the purpose of raising funds and making the Party known. The General Secretary was further instructed to write for delegates credentials for the forthcoming Congress of the Second International to be held in Amsterdam. It was taken for granted that the Party would automatically affiliate to this body. Later developments brought about a reversal of this attitude.

A Resolution was also carried at this meeting that the special meeting of members to discuss the attitude to trade unions be held on Saturday, July 9th, and that only those who had signed the Party's Declaration of Principles be admitted to the meeting. The Special Meeting was held at the Food Reform Restaurant, Farnival Street, E.C. There was a considerable conflict of views on the attitude to be adopted towards trade unions, and the meeting adjourned without coming to any definite decision. The E.C. was requested to arrange a further meeting. As the trade union question was a thorny subject for the first two years of the Party's history, before a definite attitude was agreed upon, we will consider it at some length in later notes.

The International Socialist Bureau was the body that conducted the business of the Second International between Congresses. As the Bureau declined to recognise the Party a letter was sent to H. M. Hyndman and H. Quelch, as representatives of that body in this country, requesting them to use their influence in the direction of securing due recognition of the Party by the International Congress.

Eventually the Credential Forms arrived, and then the fun began; the problem of finding members who could make the journey, and raising money for expenses. J. Kent was approached to represent the Party, on the understanding that all or part of his expenses would be paid. He replied that he was willing if part of his expenses was paid. Money was collected and sent on to him, but he subsequently wrote that he could not travel as the amount subscribed did not help much. This letter came before the Executive meeting of the 15th August. Lehane (the General Secretary) reported that immediately he received Kent's letter he proceeded to the address of the Party Treasurer, R. Elrick, who advanced the sum necessary to cover the expenses. Lehane made an appointment by wire with Kent for the following day, Friday the 12th August, and handed him £2 18s. which, with the sum of £1 11s. 4d. previously collected, made up £4 10s. in all. Kent then undertook to proceed to Amsterdam the following morning. The state of Party finance may be gathered

from the difficulty in raising such a small amount as £4 10s. Part of it came from a collection at the Special Meeting of members.

A few days later Kent notified the Executive that he had arrived in Amsterdam and that A. Pearson, who was paying his own expenses, had turned up and joined him as a delegate of the Party.

The report the two delegates brought back from the Congress was a shock to the members and fundamentally altered the Party's attitude to the Second International. At first attempts were made by correspondence with the Bureau to get our views on the unsatisfactory state of affairs put before the parties affiliated to the Congress. The basis of the complaints was (1) That representation at the Congress was chaotic and (2) That delegates from organisations with no socialist basis were admitted to Congress.

At the first General Meeting of the Party on the 18th September the following resolution was carried unanimously:

"That the E.C. be instructed to prepare a statement of the position in Great Britain, go into the whole question of representation at the International Socialist Congress and carry on an agitation throughout the world for the purpose of clearing the air of confusion regarding the true basis of the Socialist Movement."

The E.C. carried out the instructions contained in this resolution as far as they could. The January 1905 number of the SOCIALIST STANDARD contained copies of correspondence with the Bureau. The front page had a message "To the Socialist Working-class" in English, French and German which, after a general criticism of past Congresses, contained the following:

"The Socialist Party of Great Britain is strengthened in this opinion by facts well known here which show clearly the principles animating many who took part in the recent congress at Amsterdam. Our delegates thereto found such organisations as the Independent Labour Party, the Labour Representative Committee, the Social-Democratic Federation, and the Fabian Society claiming and obtaining admission as Socialist Organisations. Thus were seen the defenders of capitalism, the upholders of Child-slavery, the friends of Compromise and Reform, and the

catpaw of the Bourgeois reaction generally masquerading as Revolutionists, prostituting the name and spirit of Socialism, and confusing the workers on questions of vital importance."

"With the object of placing future International Congresses on a definite Socialist basis, and securing proper and proportionate representation of all bona fide Socialist Parties thereat, the S.P.G.B. is preparing a memorandum for the consideration of the International Bureau and the Socialist Parties affiliated in the hope that measures will be adopted to as far as possible prevent the recurrence of past confusions and place the working-class of the world on a united and revolutionary platform."

The Executive Committee reported on their efforts to the first Conference of the Party in April 1905. The Conference then passed the following resolution:—

"That only Socialist Organisations recognising the class struggle in theory and practice should be represented at the International Socialist Congress."

"That disputes between the various parties in each country as to the genuineness of their respective organisations be settled by Congress itself."

After further correspondence with the Bureau we eventually withdrew from the International as our points were not conceded. From that time on a critical attitude developed towards prominent champions of social democracy and we had, at times, to dissociate ourselves from some of their actions. In 1906 we called A. Bebel to book for a telegram he sent to "Reynolds" hailing the Liberal victory as a triumph for the progressive forces. Bebel, along with Karl Liebknecht, had been an outstanding figure in the German Social Democratic Party during the last quarter of the 19th century. The correspondence we had with him on the subject occupied six columns of the SOCIALIST STANDARD in April 1906. The STANDARD was then double its present size.

In the next contribution we will come to an important landmark in the Party's history; the production of the first number of the SOCIALIST STANDARD in September 1904.

GILMAC.

(To be continued.)

THE PASSING SHOW

Wage-earners

An article appeared in *The Observer* on March 28th which perpetuates some widely-held, but false, beliefs about the distribution of income since the war. The article is by *The Observer's* economic correspondent, and it seeks to investigate the reasons why the rate of capital investment in this country is lower than in any other industrial country of Western Europe. The article says that one reason is that what are called "the middle-classes" are worse off now than they were before the war:

"Too many middle-class families are dis-saving—eating into whatever capital they have. While most wage-earners, naturally enough, are spending, not saving, their improved incomes."

"Improved incomes?" Since the article is by an

economist, one assumes that the writer is not merely drawing attention to the obvious fact that since pre-war days the income of wage-earners has improved in purely nominal terms—that the wage-earner has more pieces of coloured paper in his wage-pocket. It seems clear that the writer intends to allege that in real terms the wage-earner now has a larger income than he did in 1938—that is, that his wages will buy more now than they did pre-war.

The best estimates of the average increase of industrial workers' wage-rates and of the workers' cost-of-living are those prepared by the London and Cambridge Economic Service. They show that since 1938 industrial wage-rates have risen by about 125 per cent.—rather less than the cost-of-living. Some workers have had wage increases rather more than the

increase of the cost-of-living but the workers in many industries have seen their wage-rates fall behind prices.

For clerical workers—not included in the estimates of the average increase of wage-rates—there can be no doubt that earnings have fallen well behind the increase of the cost-of-living.

In 1938 the workers could only save by depriving themselves and their families of some necessities.

The same is true now.

Hot Air

A vast amount of hot air has recently been expended on both sides of the Channel on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Anglo-French Entente. For those who find some entertainment in the depths of fatuity reached by princes and politicians on occasions such as this, here are some quotations from the congratulatory messages exchanged between French and British notables:

"A powerful contribution towards the peace of the world and the welfare of mankind" (Queen Elizabeth).

"The ideal of liberty shared by our two peoples" (President Coty).

"This great and noble Entente" (Mr. Churchill).

"A friendship founded in the same ideal of peace . . . the democratic liberties which are the basis of our civilisation" (M. Laniel).

"The Franco-British alliance is the alliance of liberty and of peace" (M. Bidault) (*The Times*, 8-4-54; the *Manchester Guardian*, 19-3-54.)

If we were to go by what these people say, we would conclude that the Entente was a noble agreement devoted to peace, liberty and the welfare of mankind.

. . . . and History

But history is intractable; the facts are on record. The Anglo-French Entente of 1904 was a compact between two thieves for the share of booty which each had stolen or was in the process of stealing from third parties. The two thieves were the British ruling class and the French ruling class. The British and French people had nothing to do with such an agreement, and were not consulted. The treaty delineated the French and British spheres of influence respectively in West Africa, Siam, Madagascar and the New Hebrides; but the peoples of the territories were not represented at the negotiations. There had been disagreement also along the North African seaboard: France was trying to horn in on a country conquered by the British rulers—Egypt—while Britain was casting longing glances at a country taken over by the French ruling class—Morocco. So the British generously agreed to hand over the Moroccans to the French capitalists for their exploitation, in return for the promise of the latter not to interfere with the trade and strategical interests of British capitalism in Egypt. For all the "ideals of liberty" which were shared by the two sides, for all the lip-service to the "welfare of mankind" which was paid then and now, no one suggested that either the Egyptian or Moroccan peoples should be consulted.

And so successful was this bargain between the

two predatory capitalist states, that today they still cling to much of their respective shares. And still try to camouflage its real nature with high-sounding words.

Onwards and upwards

The march of progress continues. The atomic bomb makes block-busters obsolete. The hydrogen bomb makes the atomic bomb obsolete. It is forecasted that the cobalt bomb will make the hydrogen bomb obsolete. And altogether, unless we end the system of society which produces and uses these weapons, they will make human life obsolete.

For capitalism has used the atomic bomb and may use the hydrogen bomb. We should make no mistake about that. The voices now raised in terror, calling for "the banning of the hydrogen bomb," are no more than the twitterings of birds which, if we insist on retaining the capitalist system, may be overwhelmed by the approaching storm of atomic annihilation. The antagonisms and fears aroused by the conflicts which are inevitable in capitalist society, and which are increased by the existence of these terrible weapons, make it certain that in any future war each side will be tempted to use all the instruments of destruction at its disposal; if only to try and prevent the other side using them.

Retaliation

An argument which has been heard often recently is that gas was not used in the last war "because of the fear of retaliation." This is nonsense. Did either side fail to use twelve-thousand pounder bombs, twenty-thousand pounder bombs, V1's and V2's "because of the fear of retaliation?" Gas was not used because the carrying power of bombers could be more "profitably" employed with high-explosive bombs. The merits of gas, which could only be used to kill people, paled beside those of high-explosive, which would kill just as many people and would wreck houses and factories.

The same motives which led the Anglo-American ruling class in 1945, with a full and clear knowledge of what they were doing, to destroy one hundred and twenty thousand human beings in the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are still in being. They derive from the very nature of capitalist society.

Back to savagery

Since the beginning of the Mau Mau troubles in Kenya, the official line has been that the disturbances spring from the allegedly "savage" nature of the Kikuyu concerned. For if responsibility could be fixed on the primitive character of the Africans, then clearly no one could lay any blame on the incursion of white settlers which has taken place since the beginning of the century. On the other hand, Socialists have maintained that the troubles are caused by the British colonisation of Kenya, which has attempted forcibly to extinguish the old African society, based on the communal use of land, and to introduce into its place

a new Westernised society, based on individual private ownership of land. Now Max Gluckman, Professor of Social Anthropology in the University of Manchester, has written an article in the *Manchester Guardian* (19-3-54) showing why the official explanations of Mau Mau will not hold water.

Impersonal system

Professor Gluckman says "Mau Mau is a product of the colonisation of Africa, and not of pagan Africa." This European colonisation, he says,

"brought the members of these small face-to-face communities into relationship with strangers, both white and black. They became members of a large-scale impersonal system, whose limits they did not know. They migrated, usually for short periods, to work on White farms and in White agriculture. There a thirties were white, their fellow-workers no longer kinsfolk, and often not even fellow-tribesmen."

In these circumstances the pagan religions lost ground rapidly. They were evolved to deal with the conditions of the old society, and they could not grapple with the new. "If an ancestral cult has kinship boundaries, it cannot deal with strangers." But another set of beliefs—beliefs in magic and witchcraft—could be expanded to deal with the new circumstances, such as "failing crops, deteriorating cattle, new struggles for power, break up of old relations, competition for and loss of jobs, the criminality which develops in urban

situations." It is against this background, Professor Gluckman insists, that we must understand the development of Mau Mau.

"Next door to Nairobi and to great estates, Kikuyu-land has become a reservoir of slum labour for White enterprise. Secular political bodies, normal to our system, have been repeatedly proscribed. Driven underground and desperate, some Kikuyu have organised themselves with the aid of supernatural oaths, which alone—as in our own history—can band men together in these conditions. The savagery of Mau Mau has been recently paralleled in Europe by nations with a long Christian tradition. In their helplessness these Kikuyu rely on magic and a developed sorcery."

In British history the onset of capitalism involved periodic outbreaks of machine-smashing and Luddism, and produced movements looking back to the peasant past. And British society had a much more gradual introduction to capitalism than African society is having. It was to be expected that the African equivalents of our own Luddite riots should be much more violent. But African workers who support and participate in Mau Mau, like English workers in the last century who used to smash machines, are running their heads against a brick wall. The past, in Africa as in Britain, is dead and cannot be resuscitated. The solution is the same in Africa as it is in Europe and America and Asia; not back to a tribal or a peasant past, but forward from capitalism to Socialism.

JOSHUA.

PENSIONS AND POVERTY

IN April, 1908, a young man lost a bye-election in North-West Manchester. He had been President of the Board of Trade in Mr. Asquith's government, serving on the cabinet with Sir Edward Grey, Haldane and Lloyd George. A brilliant future was predicted for him. His name was Winston Churchill. He was not out of Parliament for long. In the Manchester Reform Club after the count a messenger brought a telegram from the Liberal party in Dundee, inviting him to contest a pending bye-election. Before Dundee voted, the Chancellor of the Exchequer presented his budget, with provision for the payment of old age pensions.

The decision of the Liberal government of 1908 to introduce the Old Age Pensions Act was first announced in the King's speech in January of that year and was met with cries of, "The country can't afford it!" (The annual cost was £6 million—today it is over £275 million.) Nevertheless, the year saw the Act passed, granting to people of 70 or over a pension of from 1s. to 5s., subject to a means test. After 1908 many Acts covering sickness and unemployment insurance were passed, including the Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pension Scheme of 1925—which introduced contributory pensions—and the Old Age Pensions Act of 1936, which allowed non-contributory pensions at 70. Thus when the 1939 war came the Statute Book carried a mass of legislation

dealing with national insurance. The system had developed piecemeal and contained many inconsistencies and much overlapping between government departments, local authorities and the Approved Societies.

To unravel this tangle an inter-departmental committee was set up in June 1941, under the chairmanship of Sir William (now Lord) Beveridge, to survey the whole field of social insurance and allied schemes and to make recommendations on their inter-relation. This committee produced in November 1942 the famous Beveridge report. At that time, in the depth of the war, the report appealed widely as a design for a great new world and many extravagant hopes were conceived. Beveridge, himself was, apparently, less sanguine. In the *Sunday Times* of 14/2/54 he says, "The Beveridge Report . . . was a model . . . of financial caution and of moral responsibility, above all in regard to pensions."

In February 1946 the National Insurance Act 1946 was debated in the House of Commons. Although the Bill was sponsored by the Labour government of the time, the Conservatives gave their support and the second reading was taken without a division. The Act implemented many of Beveridge's recommendations and covered a wide and complex field. The principle of the "subsistence level"—that is, benefits as of right high enough to command the bare necessities of

life—was accepted and a method of adjusting benefits to allow for changes in the cost of living was devised. Minimum old age pensions were immediately raised to 26s. per week, thus rejecting Beveridge's proposal of a gradual increase over a period of years. Perhaps it was this splash of generosity which moved Mr. Arthur Greenwood to say in the debate on the Bill, "It . . . is a contribution to the better life which . . . the people of this country richly deserve . . . which will enable the people . . . to tread the path of greater freedom with great dignity . . ."

As laid down in the National Insurance Act of 1946, retirement pensions were easily the most expensive of benefits. It was estimated at the time that in the first year of their payment they would account for half the cost of the entire National Insurance Scheme and by 1976 for two-thirds of the total cost. In addition, many people receiving pensions at the new higher rate had only contributed amounts in accordance with the former (lower) pension. Thus it was expected that, even if pensions remained at 26s. per week, the expenditure of the pension fund would eventually exceed its income. But the rise of prices since 1946 has reduced the buying power of the 26s., so that in 1951 and again in 1952 it was necessary to apply the principle of the "subsistence level" and increase the minimum retirement pension. Today it stands at 32s. 6d. And old age pensions, whatever the amount, will become steadily payable to an increasing number—in the next 20 years the number of people of pensionable age will rise from seven million to 10 million.

These factors have aggravated the problem of balancing the accounts of the National Insurance Fund. The government actuary's report on the scheme for 1951-52 estimated that only 5 per cent. of expenditure on retirement pensions is covered by past contributions: this year is expected to be the last in which the fund's income from contributions and exchequer assistance will balance with its expenditure. In the future there will be a growing deficit which will rise to about £417 millions by 1978 and which can only be eased by such measures as: (a) reducing pensions; (b) postponing the minimum pensionable age; or (c) increasing contributions. Once again, " . . . the country can't afford it! . . ." The *Manchester Guardian* of 10/2/54 commented, "The problems involved . . . are such that it could make the financing of National Insurance a main issue at the next election." So we are nearly back to Dundee, 1908!

Nobody should conclude from this that the life of an old age pensioner is one long spree of riotous extravagance. In fact, the worry of making ends meet presses as heavily today as ever. Both the *News Chronicle* and the *Manchester Guardian* have recently published a series of articles on the serious distress of old people. A letter to the editor of the *News Chronicle* on 4/3/54 told of an unexpected visit on a woman pensioner which found her without a fire, making a dinner of a slice of dry bread and a meat extract cube dissolved in water. In the *Manchester Guardian* of 11/11/53 appeared the story of a W.V.S. worker who helped to distribute cheap lunches to old people in Poplar. Among those she served was the

blind man who lived alone in a room at the top of a lodging house, who never had a fire, a plate or a saucepan. He would sometimes grumble and swear, sometimes smile obsequiously, at the women who brought his food. And there was an old woman who lay in a room congested with dusty Victorian furniture, who never spoke, only glared and spat into a kitchen bowl. These are not exceptional cases. In his report for 1953 the Medical Officer for Brighton recorded some terrible poverty amongst the aged and contended that their lot has actually worsened since the introduction of the so-called Welfare State. The National Federation of Old Age Pensioners' Associations calculated in May 1953, after a survey of 2,700 pensioners, that the 32s. 6d. per week fell short of a single pensioner's actual needs by 6s. 6d. and that many pensioners were consequently living below the line of subsistence. These facts are hard to reconcile with Mr. Greenwood's promised path of freedom and dignity.

Inadequate pensions have compelled more and more people to apply for National Assistance. In December 1953 nearly one and a quarter million persons who were drawing National Insurance benefits were also receiving National Assistance. About 80 per cent. of these were old and sick. The needs of a single person, excluding rent, are assessed by the National Assistance Board at 35s. per week. In most cases an additional average of 11s. 6d. per week is granted for rent. This payment is subject to a means test. According to the National Federation of Old Age Pensioners, it leaves less than 2s. to be spent on food each day. This, then, is the outcome of the hopes and the promises to care for the aged. We have a pensions scheme, which, whilst fast running into the red, does not provide benefits large enough to keep pensioners on the level of bare subsistence, so forcing them to submit to a means test to obtain assistance which in turn is insufficient. The reformers' plans have once more gone awry: the means test of so many unpleasant memories is with us again. Lord Beveridge said in the House of Lords on 20/5/53 that "National Assistance, which the experts and I thought would have to continue on a small scale and would gradually diminish, is increasing year by year. Today there are at least twice as many people, nearly two million people, in receipt of National Assistance, subject to a means test, more than there were three or four years ago."

Old people may well wonder why their burden is always so heavy. Firstly, they are not poor because they are old; but because they are old workers: their poverty is the distilled, concentrated poverty of the whole working-class. It is a condition which only the working-class experience—aged capitalists do not need to apply for National Assistance. Secondly, capitalism is not much interested in old people. Workers live only by their wage, which depends upon being able to work. When working ability is impaired by approaching old age the wage is threatened and eventually ceases. Employers, in their own interests, have most use for young workers—the old, if employed at all, are relegated to such jobs as nightwatchman or

(Continued on page 79)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

GODS WITH HEADS OF CLAY

WHAT do the voters think of the men they elect to govern them? Of the Cabinet Ministers and M.P.s, the Government's advisers among top-ranking civil servants, army and navy officers, and the elite of big business and the City? There are so many answers that it would be unsafe to generalise, but among the attitudes are two that cover quite a large part of the population. One group regards the men at the top with awe and respect and with no breath of doubt or criticism. They are seen as good men and clever men, able at all times to discover what is the correct policy to adopt and honest enough to carry it out. The second group are superficially very different from the first. They are less trusting about the honesty of politicians and business men and believe them to be mostly concerned with feathering their own nests. The second group despises the first for its unworshipful innocence. Yet, curiously, the two groups have one important thing in common; they both make the profound error of believing that policy at top levels is guided by great powers of knowledge and wisdom and not subject to the errors that mar from time to time even the best efforts of ordinary mortals.

While one group thinks that government policy (at any rate while *their* Party is in power) will be a wise policy, in the hands of honest well-meaning men, the second group takes equal comfort in the belief that it will be a shrewd policy, in the hands of astute men who are no better than they should be.

The point of both beliefs is that they are very comforting to those who hold them. But the truth of the matter—which is not comforting at all—is that just as often as not the “men of destiny” are blunder-

ing about, at their wits end to know what to do next and hoping that their blind guesses will turn out to be the right ones. What fogs the issues is that there are certain to be hordes of academic or technical experts, and harassed hand-to-mouth journalists, able to “prove” that the most fantastic nonsense is sound sense; until the policy is reversed, when they will be just as enthusiastic about its opposite.

Anyone with a fairly long memory of the wars, crises and politics of our generation will be able to find examples galore; and history is full of them. A neat example has recently been disclosed by Lord Brand in his Presidential address to the Royal Economic Society (“Economic Journal” December, 1953). Lord Brand, now holding banking and insurance directorships and directorship on the Times Publishing Company, had experience after the first world war and again in the second war as government representative and financial adviser at home and abroad. He tells us some interesting things about the efforts to make German capitalism pay reparations for the first world war, a problem that bedevilled world politics for about 15 years.

Flushed with victory and enmeshed in their own war propaganda the Allied politicians were committed, Mr. Lloyd George at the forefront, to making Germany pay and hanging the Kaiser. So in 1920 they provisionally agreed that Germany was to pay not more than 269,000 million Gold Marks. Successively this was cut to 240,000 million, to 226,000 million and to 132,000 million. Germany then defaulted and French and Belgian troops occupied the Ruhr to enforce payment of the annual contributions. After endless negotiations and international conferences a Reparations scheme was devised that worked quite well from 1924 to 1931. It did so because Germany was borrowing from America, Britain and other countries more than she was paying in Reparations! Then came the world depression and a new total was fixed at 3,000 million—about one ninetieth part of the original figure. Finally Hitler's Government repudiated the obligation entirely. Now we come to Lord Brand's disclosure. It tells us how the original amounts were arrived at:

“I remember in the days after the First World War, sometime in 1919, going to that delightful old rabbit warren of a Treasury in Whitehall to see Sir John Bradbury, as he then was, who was head of the Treasury. He happened to tell me that Lord Cunliffe, then Governor of the Bank of England, had just been in to see him and had given him a copy of a Report that a Committee of which he was Chairman had made to Lloyd George, then Prime Minister, on the question of Germany's capacity to pay reparations. Sir John Bradbury told me that the first item was a payment by Germany of £200 million in gold, and he asked Lord Cunliffe how he had arrived at this figure. Lord Cunliffe's gruff answer was, ‘Because it's twice as much as they've got.’ Sir John then asked Lord Cunliffe how the committee arrived at the huge figure which they estimated Germany could pay. Lord Cunliffe, according to Bradbury, said in reply, ‘Do you know what the site value of Berlin alone is?’ I doubt if Sir John Bradbury knew the answer or thought it relevant, but Lord Cunliffe's question throws a light on how much was then known about the Transfer problem.”

This reference to the transfer problem concerned

among other things the experience of this and other countries receiving reparations of finding that delivery meant busy factories and shipyards in Germany and heavy unemployment at the receiving end.

Lord Brand adds further comments. The first is about an incident at a Guildhall dinner in the early nineteen twenties.

“I was telling my next door neighbour this story of the conversation between Lord Cunliffe and Sir John Bradbury when another banker Peer, who was sitting on the other side of the table intervened to say, ‘I was a member of that committee. We were appointed by Mr. Lloyd George on Friday to tell him what Germany could pay and told we must report to him by the following Monday. We therefore added up what we understood to be the total cost of the whole war (whether it included the United States costs I am not sure), and we reported on Monday to the Prime Minister that this was what Germany could pay.’”

The second is about Lord Brand's own scepticism. “I remember when the first report on reparations was to be put to the Big Four, Lord Robert Cecil asked me to comment upon it. I wrote him a very short report saying that I calculated that by the time I was eighty, then being about thirty, Germany would still be paying £400 millions a year. If he thought this was politically and financially

possible, it was all right, otherwise it was nonsensical.”

We may suitably conclude with two more quotations from Lord Brand's address, one about modern economic writings and one about a much admired economist who died a few years ago, the late Lord Keynes.

Other sufferers may sympathise with Lord Brand's confession—

“I have no capacity to understand mathematics or algebra. I have indeed to admit that, as time goes on my capacity to understand much that is written about economics grow less and less, as the mathematicians get more and more into the saddle.”

The last is to be read in the light of the “dollar shortage” about which we have heard so much since 1945.

“Is there any economist or social philosopher, for instance, who can predict what is going to happen six months, three months, one month ahead? . . . Even the most distinguished men can see very little ahead. Lord Keynes wrote his last article for the *Economic Journal* in my office in Washington. In it he predicted that it was likely there might be not a scarcity but a plethora of dollars in the forthcoming years after the war!”

MYTHS ABOUT MARXISM

THE *Manchester Guardian* recently published four articles by Professor H. Seton-Watson entitled “Some Myths of Marxism.” The *Manchester Guardian* thought they were worth publishing in the form of a pamphlet and in January of this year produced a 6d. pamphlet of 12 pages.

It is clear that when Professor Seton-Watson writes of “Some Myths of Marxism” he produces Myths about Marxism—Marxism has been so perverted in the last 50 years that it is always the wisest policy to read the actual works of Marx and Engels to understand it. A knowledge of Marxism will not be obtained by reading the works of Lenin, Stalin, or some of the myths of Professor H. Seton-Watson.

The professor writes:—“The 20th century is also an age of political dogmas based on ideas which were once live but have become fossilised and no longer explain the phenomena to which they are said to relate. Fossilisation does not, however, deprive them of power over men's minds. The most important body of such dogma is of course Marxism, with or without its Leninist and Stalinist accretions.” He goes on to say:—“Those who wish to understand the revolutions of the 20th century—which affect us all in a much more complicated and pervasive way than those who are either frightened or bored by talk of the ‘Communist challenge’ will admit—must get away from dogmas and slogans and look at the social and political processes of the recent past and the present. And these derive directly or indirectly from the Industrial Revolution. West Europeans and North Americans who understandably regard this as a thing of the fairly remote past, should not forget that for Russia, Japan, or Eastern Europe it is the recent past or the present, and for

large parts of Asia, Latin America and Africa the future. Too little has been done to compare the effects of the Industrial revolution, in terms of the formation of social classes and political power, in the many different regions and stages of its development.”

It is apparent that H. Seton-Watson in the above paragraph quoted is using the very method which he states has become fossilised and can no longer explain the phenomena to which they are said to relate. F. Engels in “Socialism: Utopian and Scientific” dealing with the Materialist Conception of History stated:—“The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the means to support human life and, next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure: that in every society that has appeared in history, the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders, is dependent upon what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged. From this point of view the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in men's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the philosophy, but in the economics of each particular epoch.”

Socialists use the theory of history to understand the world they live in, it is not a dogma but a method by which we can understand the reasons for the changes that take place in the world.

Socialism and Capitalism

H. Seton-Watson as might be expected confuses Socialism with state capitalism as for example in the

following paragraph:— "The nature of the distinction between types of industrialisation has been observed by controversy about words and slogans. To Stalinists, to a lesser extent to all Marxists and also to doctrinaires of private enterprise the essential distinction is between a society in which all industry is State owned and all other industrial societies: the first is 'Socialist,' the others are 'capitalist.' Surely the truer line of distinction is between societies in which the direction of industrialisation and the control of industry are principally, though not necessarily entirely, in private hands and those in which they are principally, though not necessarily entirely, in the hands of the State."

To Marxists the essential point is that whether industry is in private hands or State owned, or part private and part state owned, all are capitalist. Any commodity producing society in which the majority of the population have no means of subsistence and are therefore compelled to sell their power to labour to the owners of the means of production and distribution, for a wage or salary in order to live, is a capitalist society. Whether the owners of the means of life are private individuals or the state does not alter this fact. The majority of the population, the working class, are exploited under state capitalism and private capitalism. This point is being made increasingly clear in this country by the nationalisation of certain industries and means of transport made by the Labour Government.

"The Imperial Conscience"

Under this heading Professor H. Seton-Watson states:— "A public conscience was also created about imperialism. The pressure of Liberal and Socialist opinion in Britain, and to a lesser extent in France, has been a major factor in constitutional changes in the British and French empires. At the same time the growing freedom of speech and organisation permitted the educated élites of the colonial people to form societies and parties which grew into great mass movements and forced Imperial Governments to make concessions. Colonial history in the twentieth century has its episodes, of repression and bloodshed, like the Amritsar shooting of 1919 or the Algerian massacre of 1945. But the use of repression is limited both by public opinion in metropolitan countries and by scruples of colonial officials brought up in a Liberal tradition. For all the rhetoric of Colonial Nationalists and Communist propagandists, it remains true that no liberal capitalist Government has used extermination as a weapon against its workers or its colonial subjects."

How much truth is there in this? Doesn't Kenya and Malaya refute these statements? Of course H. Seton-Watson can always quote India, but how much more realistic to recognise that the granting of independence to India was not so much because of Imperial conscience but a recognition that such a vast continent with its millions of inhabitants, could no longer be held down by force.

Revolution.—Professor H. Seton-Watson seems to think that revolution means cataclysm, that a socialist revolution could only come from a catastrophe. The S.P.G.B. holds that a Socialist revolution can only

become possible when the majority of the population understand and desire Socialism. Hence Socialists organise and form Socialist parties for the purpose of propaganda and the capture of state power. The capture of the power of the state is needed to dispossess the capitalist class and make the means and instruments of wealth production and distribution common property. It could possibly be that by the time the organised working class have socialist understanding and are ready and in a position to capture the power of the state, that the great institutions for production and communication are in the hands of the state. But as Engels states:— "The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage workers—proletarians."

The capture of state power by the working class, the transformation of the means and instruments of wealth production into common property means that the production of commodities is done away with; by this act, the proletariat frees the means of production from the character of capital. But in doing this, it abolishes itself as proletariat, abolishes all class distinctions and class antagonisms when the means of life are common property class society ceases to exist.

Class society exists in Russia, the State exists in Russia, commodity production exists in Russia, there is nothing even faintly resembling Socialism in Russia yet H. Seton-Watson supports the myth that there is something Socialistic about the U.S.S.R.

Whether the professor has ever read F. Engels' introduction to "The Class Struggles in France" by K. Marx is not known to the writer, but he seems unaware of it. Engels admits in the introduction that some of the views previously held by Marx and himself were wrong. That a Socialist transformation requires the understanding and desire on the part of the working class.

Parliament is the centre of power in Great Britain, it makes the laws and provides for their enforcement. The S.P.G.B. holds the same view as Marx as for the necessity of the workers obtaining control of the machinery of government before they can establish Socialism.

H. Seton-Watson writes:— "The hostility of the masses cannot shake the Government of an industrialised 20th century State, least of all if it is totalitarian." Of course he has Russia in mind. However we have no evidence that the overwhelming majority of the people in Russia oppose the ruling clique. That there is considerable discontent we can agree but no Government could have survived the last war in Russia unless they had the backing of the masses. Admittedly the "Communists" have retained power for 37 years but they have been compelled many times to change their policies by the force of economic

events. The introduction of the New Economic Policy by Lenin is an example. H. Seton-Watson is wrong in stating that "Once in power, the revolutionaries establish their own political regime and pursue their own economic and cultural policies, which affect the pace and nature of industrialisation and the formation of social classes." The structure of society depends on the conditions of its productive forces. Men make history but only under certain limiting conditions. He is also wrong in stating "In Yugoslavia Marxist doctrine has been preserved." Socialism is the system of society which will follow capitalism, it is capitalism which destroys the peasantry who form a considerable portion of the Yugoslav population. The peasant attached to his own little bit of land is the last person to want socialism.

The Meaning of Exploitation

On the subject of exploitation H. Seton-Watson is so muddled that he can never have read Marx's "Capital," or if he has, he obviously doesn't understand it. He states "Exploitation of the working class is a result not of capitalism but of the early stages of the industrial revolution." He considers that during the industrial revolution in this country the workers were exploited, but not now. That in India for example where an industrial revolution is now taking place on an increasing scale, exploitation occurs, but this exploitation is only during the early stages of capitalism in any given country.

Let us look at the Marxist answer. The working class in this country having no means of subsistence are compelled to sell their mental and physical energies to the owners of the means and instruments of wealth production for a wage in order to buy the things they need to exist. They sell their power to labour, but create values greater than the value of the labour power. The value of labour power is approximately equivalent to the wage received. Therefore during the week the workers not only create values equal to the values they receive but also create surplus value, and it is this surplus value which enables the capitalists to increase their capital and at the same time live a life of luxury. Whether the worker receives high wages or low wages he is still exploited, he creates values greater than he receives back in the form of wages. H. Seton-Watson like most supporters of capitalism does not regard this as exploitation. Marxism is opposed by the capitalist class so strongly because only by Marxian economics can the exploitation of the working class be shown. Together with the Materialist Conception of History and the recognition of the class struggle it forms the backbone of the S.P.G.B. case.

Professor Seton-Watson says the present conflict in world affairs is not as Marxists claim a struggle between "capitalism and socialism." Since the Socialist movement is so small, since the knowledge of socialism has not reached the majority of workers, it is absurd to state that Marxists claim that the present unrest in the world is due to the struggle between capitalism and

socialism. Of course as is usual among the misinformed H. Seton-Watson equates Marxism with Leninism and Stalinism.

The struggle between Russia and her satellites and U.S.A. and her satellites is a struggle between two opposing capitalist regimes. The class struggle of the workers takes place against both these capitalist giants, but as yet there is no revolutionary working class beyond a small minority.

The *Manchester Guardian* adds a comment to the pamphlet agreeing with H. Seton-Watson that in countries with a long industrial history the working class is no longer revolutionary. It wants reforms but not upheaval. But have the working class ever been revolutionary? A social revolution we understand to mean a complete change in the social life of a country. The working class in no country have ever desired or attempted to change the entire social life of the world they live in. Reforms they have supported but social revolution no. The error held by H. Seton-Watson and the *Manchester Guardian* in thinking that the workers in this country were once revolutionary, lies in the method by which struggles for reforms took place.

In the days of the Chartists there was no adult suffrage as we have today, consequently the struggle for reforms had to be conducted by different methods than those used today. It is significant that as certain reforms were introduced, the Chartist movement died out, it did not aim at social revolution and therefore as its demands were met or partially attained there was no longer any reason for its existence.

The *Manchester Guardian* states that "Another Marxist axiom is that our industrial society's slumps prepare the way for Communist revolution. This is untrue." We will assume that by "Communist revolution" the *Manchester Guardian* means the converting of the means of wealth production and distribution to common ownership and democratically controlled by the whole of society, not state capitalism. Slumps speed up the destruction of the small capitalists many of whom go bankrupt, they also assist in dispelling some of the illusions of the working class about capitalism. But until the working class have socialist knowledge a social revolution is impossible. H. Seton-Watson thinks it unlikely that in modern industrialised countries there can ever be a revolution on the stock pattern expected by most Marxists. Because today, the state machine is so powerful that it is virtually impregnable. The *Manchester Guardian* says "The task of overthrowing the American state is much too formidable for any small revolutionary party." No small revolutionary party can hope to overthrow the state machine in an industrialised country. No Marxist thinks it could. H. Seton-Watson and the *Manchester Guardian* write of Myths of Marxism, it turns out that these ideas are Myths about Marxism based upon the distortion of Marxism by Leninism and Stalinism. One of the tasks of the S.P.G.B. is to help destroy these myths and thus assist in the propagation of Marxism and by so doing build up a revolutionary working class party.

D.W.L.

THE MYTH OF RACE

THE racial question is one of the most urgent problems of Capitalism today, and as such merits the attention of everyone. We can only treat it briefly in these columns, however, and those wishing to go into the subject more thoroughly are advised to read our pamphlet "The Racial Problem—A Socialist Analysis," which deals with the question in detail.

What is Race?

In the first place, what do we mean by the word "race"? Immediately we ask this question we realise into what a morass we have stepped, because the word is used to cover many quite different meanings. The "Black Race," the "Brown Race," the "Yellow Race," for example, cover groups of people in varying stages of culture and with all kinds of differing attributes quite apart from the different colour of their skins. The terms "American Race," "British Race," "African Race," describe only the inhabitants of particular territories; the "Mohammedan Race" and the "Jewish Race" are religious distinctions; and the "Celtic Race," the "Aryan Race," and the "Semitic Race," refer to particular types of language.

Here, then, to start with are four different meanings commonly associated with race, and there are others.

The Myth of Racial Purity

Underlying the use of the word race is the idea that there are certain groups of people who, like the thoroughbred horse, have kept their "blood" free from alien mixture for hundreds of years. This idea is completely without scientific basis.

At the outset it may be pointed out that there are no physical distinctions that can denote purity of blood. People from this country who spend most of their lifetime in the Colonies develop physical characteristics that mark them off from their relatives who have remained at home. In a book by Brunton entitled "Kings and Queens of Ancient Egypt" there are a number of coloured illustrations of Ancient Egyptian women. If one covers the headdress of many of these women alleged to be racially pure their features and colouring are the replica of many present-day English women who have a murky heredity. The reader can multiply instances from his own experience where a black face, apart from its colour, is the facsimile of white faces of allegedly pure blood. Every physical characteristic that one seeks to use as the hallmark of a particular "race" bristles with exceptions. There are all varieties of white, black and red faces. It is therefore obvious that neither the colour nor the contour of a face is evidence of racial purity.

It may be added that round heads, long heads, and nondescript heads are associated with all varieties of colour, hair and facial characteristics, and even differ in the same family.

Again, place of birth is nothing to go by, as man has been on the move for thousands of years, and the most important geographical areas are inhabited by a

vast assortment of mongrels. England is an example in point where one meets many who proudly boast of their "British Nationality" in strange accents. Think, also, what a hotch-potch America is where nationals from all over the world have gone into the melting pot. Again, consider the people abroad whose fathers and grandfathers were born abroad, and yet the present generation still calls itself English—they look to England as their "country." Consider also the varieties of people of alien origin born in England.

These facts banish place of birth or country of origin as a criterion of race.

The fact is that man's wanderings over the earth have promoted such a mixture of blood that there is no such thing nowadays, even in remote places, as genuine blood purity. Twenty-five thousand or so years have bred many varieties of the human species and time will go on doing so. A name may be carried down for generations, but the blood associations of that name through the female side are beyond calculation. Many a fine name has a bundle of skeletons in the cupboard.

Language is also no guide to purity of ancestry. The most diverse people speak the same language now, and did so in the past. For example, at one time Latin was the language of both Roman and Barbarian. Today Spanish is the language of native inhabitants of South America as well as the people of Spain. English is the language of that mixture of people occupying England, South Africa, Australia, America, Canada and other places. Here we come to another point—the question of "Aryan Race." But Aryan is a language and not a blood connection. The Aryan-speaking peoples, like the Celtic, were of mixed descent. The barbarian hordes that flooded Europe in the middle ages and mingled with the population destroyed any possibility of racial purity existing in our day.

There is, in fact, no single scheme of classification that will satisfactorily cover the different types of human beings in existence. Alpine, Nordic, Mediterranean and other strains are present in varying degrees in all the peoples of Europe.

The human race comes into the world naked, and clothes itself with habits and traditions the result of social circumstances. Different sections of the human race rise and fall in culture or importance according to the nature of the social environment, irrespective of colour, language or religion. Egypt, Greece and Rome were each at the top of the cultural scale and each has come down since the time of flowering.

In the long run the social environment blends people of different stocks into one type, with similar habits and outlook. In modern times the United States is an excellent example of this.

The people that today are regarded as representative of a low cultural stage may, under favourable social circumstances, rise to supremacy tomorrow. The New Zealand Maori, not long ago looked upon as low in the cultural scale, has imbibed the arts of civilisation

at a remarkable rate, and is the equal of the highest product of civilisation.

In mankind purity of race is impossible, even if it were desirable. Even among domestic animals the greatest care can only guarantee purity from a certain point. The classic example, the thoroughbred race-horse, is only thoroughbred from the already mixed Arabian strain that was introduced into Europe two centuries ago. On the other hand, mixture of peoples has been synonymous with cultural advances from the time of Babylon and Egypt to the present day.

The Jews

The Jews, over whom race prejudice has been revived in such violent fashion, are of mixed origin, and represent a type with a religious basis and a particular historic tradition. It may be noted that a people that has been battered and hunted for centuries is liable while, and wherever, those conditions exist, to display the characteristics of the battered and hunted—distrust, clannishness, etc.

Throughout the middle ages the Jews were ruled out of practically every occupation except finance, and consequently they became adepts in that business. Since then, as other occupations have been thrown open to them, they have brought into the new spheres the single-minded concentration forced upon them by their social history, and have consequently often excelled. They have produced distinguished workers in music,

literature, science and the art of war. They are as generous, brave, cowardly, self-seeking as other types of peoples who are proud of their nationality. These "virtues" or "vices," it may be remarked, have really nothing to do with the race, but depend to a great extent upon age, health, sensitiveness, knowledge and circumstances, and vary as much in one type of people as in another. It may be added that they also depend upon the point of view of those concerned.

While, in certain circumstances, the rich Jew is fair game for the rich non-Jew, the poor Jew is always fair game for both under capitalism.

Finally, the Jewish question is not really a race question at all but an economic one. When other excuses fail it serves, as it did in Germany, to hide the real source of the misery of the mass of people of all colours and creeds. If it is not submerged by the mixture of races by that time it will certainly be solved by the advent of Socialism, under which there will not be economic crises, stagnation and poverty for millions—all things that require a scapegoat to explain. Neither will there be the competition for markets or for jobs that breed the fiends of envy, hatred, and brutality.

It may perhaps be as well to add in conclusion that we all use the word "race" loosely for want of better terms. This does little harm as long as prejudice is not tied to it.

S.H.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Our Annual Conference

The fiftieth Annual Conference of the Party was held during Easter week-end at Conway Hall, London. The attendance of members, both delegates and visitors was very stimulating; the hall was full nearly all the time during the three days. The delegation was good; sixty-five delegates representing twenty-seven out of thirty branches.

From the very beginning the Conference went with a swing and got through the business before it with expedition; delegates spoke clearly, forcefully and to the point. As a result the discussions were lively and informative. Much of the discussion concerned the reinforcing of decisions on policy that had been taken in previous years.

Among the decisions arrived at was one to publish a centenary edition of the SOCIALIST STANDARD in September. It was urged that the business should be got on with immediately, and that the cover, contents and lay-out should be carefully considered in order that the result would suitably commemorate fifty years of the Party's history and fifty years of the regular production of our journal.

Two recently formed branches, Nottingham and Swansea, sent delegates to the conference. One of the Swansea delegates reported on the difficulties the young branch was facing and the local difficulties of Party propaganda in Wales. The Branch was full of

enthusiasm and hoped to develop their own speakers in the near future.

A representative of the Socialist Party of Ireland also addressed conference and explained the interruption in their work which was caused by the death and emigration of active members. Religion still appears to be one of their principle obstacles.

A long and interesting letter was read from an old comrade in Austria containing greeting and good wishes to the conference.

Central Branch members who attended conference had a meeting with the Central Branch Secretary and discussed matters of particular interest to them. One suggestion they put forward was that the Executive committee be requested to arrange for reports of large meetings and debates to be made available to them.

A report from the Groups' secretary was read which contained information of two newly formed groups; one in Dundee and the other in Romford, Essex. Full details of meetings and the secretaries' addresses will be found under the heading "Groups" on the back page of this number. Members and sympathisers living in these areas are assured of a welcome.

There was a pleasant gathering at Head Office on Good Friday evening which enabled provincial members to get better acquainted with each other and with London members.

On Saturday evening there was a Social and Dance

at Conway Hall. The Hall was crowded and it was probably the best attended Social we have had. Everybody was in good spirits and entered into the fun with vigour.

Altogether the Conference followed the course our conferences always do, providing stimulating ideas to help members carry forward our propaganda during the year. The Conference concluded with a well attended public meeting on Sunday evening.

Outdoor Propaganda is commencing in earnest and the Propaganda committee and Branches concerned remind members that a regular attendance at meetings is encouraging to the speakers and ensures a

successful result. Details of times and meeting places are given in this issue.

Fulham Branch will hold outdoor meetings on Wednesday evenings at 8 p.m. at Gloucester Road, Kensington, and at Earls Court on Fridays at 8 p.m. Both these meetings commence promptly and members and sympathisers living in or near the area are asked to support the meetings and help to make them even more successful than the meetings held last year. The Branch feels keenly that these stations are well worth while and the more help forthcoming the more the success of the meetings is ensured.

P.H.

WAR AND WEAPONS OF WAR

THE view is held in some quarters that the more terrible the weapons, the less likely the possibility of war.

"Lord Beveridge said the development of the atom and hydrogen bomb had brought a new look into international relations. As a result of these weapons the Russians have come to want a settled peace as much as we do. We shall act on the assumption that the new Soviet rulers are sufficiently frightened of the weapons desperately to want peace and perhaps pay the price for it." (*Daily Express*, 25/3/54.)

Many people were of the opinion that the potentialities of gas warfare would prevent World War II. It didn't; and neither will the possibilities of hydrogen bombs or germ warfare prevent a World War III.

With or without these weapons war can still take place, because the cause of war remains. A sincere desire for peace is not a guarantee of it. How can there be peace between nations when their economic interests are opposed? The world peace conferences are a mockery, with each nation jockeying for positions of advantage, might being the deciding factor in every issue.

However there can be no doubt that the rulers of the great powers are certainly worried about the trend of events. This is what the Prime Minister of India has to say about it.

"Prime Minister Nehru, of India, appealed today to America and other countries with hydrogen bombs not to experiment with them. He said the after-effects on Japanese fishermen and fish from the Bikini explosion indicated that man was now using powers which were getting completely out of his control and endangering the world." (*Reuter, Daily Express*, 30/3/54.)

From the first, man has been wrestling with nature, finding out more of her secrets. He certainly won't stop now. Scientifically man has advanced more in the last 100 years than in all the previous thousands of years of his existence.

One thing, however, he has not learnt—how to harness his knowledge for the good of all. He does

not understand the social base from which his troubles spring. Out of primitive communism, chattel slavery evolved; out of chattel slavery, feudalism evolved; and out of feudalism capitalism evolved. All these revolutions were in the interests of minorities and were heralded by the new ruling class within the old society. Socialism which must evolve out of capitalism is a different revolution. It is a revolution in the interests of all and cannot be introduced by a minority. The working class being the last class to seek their emancipation must organise to introduce a new system of society, based on democratic control of the means and methods of production and distribution by and in the interests of the whole community, irrespective of race, sex or colour. This means the abolition of the wages system and the production of goods for use and not for sale. Each new scientific development will be welcomed by all, happy in the knowledge that it will be used for the benefit of man, and not for his destruction.

Men will then be men indeed and not rats as we are so often condemned to be today; Nay! worse than rats for rats will not let their young starve.

PHIL. MELLOR.

SACKCLOTH AND ASHES

Owing to the writer's abominable handwriting the printer made a number of printer's errors, some of which were missed. The following are the corrections to be made in the April front page article:—

In the first paragraph line 5, "114" should be 116. The original membership of the Party was 116. In the third paragraph, the last few lines, two names are wrongly spelt: "Engles" should be Engels, and "Louis Bondin" should be Louis Boudin. On page 50, second column, fifth paragraph, line 4, "some" should be one.

I am positively assured that my handwriting was the cause of the errors. I am surprised at this, because I can nearly always read my own writing.

In a chagrined and chastened spirit,

GILMAC.

PENSIONS AND POVERTY—continued from page 71

doorkeeper. Some firms are generous to their superannuated employees, but they are the exception and have little effect on the problem.

The decline in the working usefulness of old people is reflected in the community at large. They become unwanted, sometimes even by their own families. They are pushed from place to place and increasingly regarded as a nuisance. Some are left to decay in filthy, remote rooms. Others, like the old lady and the blind man in Poplar, maintain a fierce, abusive independence: perhaps they are the most pitiful of all.

It is fear of coming to this that makes workers support pension schemes in our workplaces and pay into the old age endowment policies which the insurance companies organise. The advertisements of these schemes aim to excite response by playing upon the dread of old age. "If it hadn't been for him I should not have been provided for," says the widow-like lady of one advertisement. The benefits of these schemes may ease old people's poverty, but its abolition is well beyond their scope.

Despite the years of legislation since 1908, to grow old can still be a catastrophe. Pensions, allowances, cheap subsidised tobacco come and go—the pensioners' poverty goes on, seemingly for ever. The history of old age pensions is one of despair, makeshift, futility—and distress. It is a fair sample of the history of reformism itself. This lesson must be learnt. Said Henry V to his reluctant soldiers before Agincourt, "Old men forget, yet all shall be forgot . . ." A melancholy phrase. Yet somewhere there must be hope. Is it too much to ask that old men should for once remember? We will settle for that. As a beginning.

IVAN.

ANOTHER OLD STALWART HAS DEPARTED

WE regret to have to record the loss of another old member of the Party, F. Foan, who died in his sleep at the age of 80. For about thirty years Comrade Foan was a regular contributor to the columns of the SOCIALIST STANDARD over the initials "F.F.", and wrote some excellent articles. After a lapse of some years he commenced writing again after the war, his last article appearing only a year or so ago.

He joined the Party in April 1906 and was a very active member of the old Battersea Branch. In the thirties he retired to Southampton, where he died.

Foan was originally a bricklayer, he later joined Fitzgerald as a teacher of building construction at the Battersea Polytechnic.

We send our sincere sympathy to his relatives, and particularly to his daughter, who is a member of the Party and has contributed regularly to our paper during the last few years.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN MAY

Wednesday: Gloucester Road Stn., Kensington, 8 p.m.

Thursdays: Notting Hill Gate, 8 p.m.

Friday: Earls Court 8 p.m. (sharp).

Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.

Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.

Hyde Park, 6 p.m.

Sundays: White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11.30 a.m.

East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.

Hyde Park, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.

Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Exmouth Market.

Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.

Thursdays: Tower Hill.

Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

ISLINGTON BRANCH DISCUSSION

At Co-op. Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7.

Thursday, May 6th, at 8 p.m.

"The Class Struggle." Opener: H. Waite.

Thursday, May 20th, at 8 p.m.

"Socialism and Democracy." Opener: J. Rowan.

ISLINGTON PUBLIC MEETING

At Islington Central Library,

68, Holloway Road, N.7.

On Wednesday, 19th May, at 8 p.m.

"McCarthy and Democracy" Speaker: L. Bryan.

CROYDON BRANCH LECTURES

The following lectures will be given at Ruskin House, Wellesley Road, Croydon (near W. Croydon Station), at 8 p.m.:—

Wed. May 5th "May Day" V. Phillips

Wed. May 19th "Propaganda" A. Turner

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 8rd Tuesday.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

DUNDEE GROUP.—Meets Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at Woodworker's Hall, Coupar's Alley, Wellgate. Correspondence to P. G. Cavanagh, 1b, Benrie Road, Dundee.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City. Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 5th and 19th May, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

ROMFORD.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.). Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 57, Fareham Avenue, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets alternate Thursdays from 6th May at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd. (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6

Palmers Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to I. G. Grisdley, 47, Eastbourne Grove, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month 7.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to D. Deutz, 21, Kenilworth Gardens, Seven Kings, Essex.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. St. Edmund's, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. 1st and 3rd Thursdays (6th and 20th May) Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., H. C. Langston, 99, Rommany Road, West Norwood, S.E.27.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea. **Fulham** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6. (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6 Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 30 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, May 3rd, 17th and 31st, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Farmer, 46, Fernie Street, Glasgow, N.W.

Hackney meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197 Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Iveney, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb, 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. C. Rowan, 39, Ellington Street, Barnsbury, N.7.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec. 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 39a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 6th and 20th April George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 3709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 598 Vol. 50 June, 1954

OUR FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

SOME NOTES ON PARTY HISTORY

PUT ONE IN HIS LEG, ELLEN

EQUALITY MEANS DIVERSITY

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

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4

The Revelations of Sir Winston Churchill

THE CONTEMPT in which the British ruling class holds those over whom it rules is shown by the readiness with which it reveals the truth about its motives and actions in the Second World War only a few years after the event. This column has already remarked upon the revealing statements made since the end of the war about both the Battle of Britain and the invasion of Norway. Now Mr. Churchill himself, the author of those stirring speeches which were so successful in inducing the British working class to fight the battles of the British capitalists for them, has made some extraordinary revelations in his last volume of the history of the war, "Triumph and Tragedy."

When Churchill met Stalin in Moscow in 1944, they both abandoned the wordy inanities with which they had exhorted their followers to greater efforts, and got down to the business of the real reasons for which the war was fought. Among these reasons the situation in the Balkans in 1939 ranked high. Hitler's successive conquests of Austria, Czechoslovakia and part of Poland gave rise to fears that he was about to begin another "Drang nach Osten," the drive to the east which had been high on the Kaiser's programme. Britain wished to conserve her influence over Greece and over the Balkans generally; and Russia was determined not only to keep the half of Poland which she had taken in 1939, but also to extend her hegemony over the rest of Eastern Europe. So when Churchill and Stalin, as the representatives of the victorious ruling classes of Britain and Russia respectively, met at Moscow, they sat down to business with no illusions as to why the other had fought the war.

Blue Pencil

Churchill wrote on a sheet of paper the respective shares which he proposed that each country should have in the various Balkan countries. He suggested that Rumania should be ninety per cent. Russian and ten per cent. British; that Greece should be ninety per cent. British and ten per cent. Russian; and that similar divisions of influence should be made in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and the rest. He pushed the sheet across the table to Stalin. "Stalin took a blue pencil, and made a large tick upon it; and passed it back. It was all settled, says Churchill, in no more time than it takes to set it down" (*Reynolds News*, 25/4/54). There was no discussion on either side, according to Churchill's own account, as to how this dividing up of smaller countries (most of which had been on the Allied side in the war) squared with the

lofty motives which each had repeatedly given in public speeches as the sole reasons for which the Allies were fighting the war. Does the reader remember the old gag about "the independence of small nations"? No mention of that here. Does the reader remember how the National Anthems of these small countries used to be played to us regularly by the B.B.C. to show us how intimately this country had their interests at heart? Now they were not even called in to give their approval of the settlement reached as to their future by their big brotherly allies. If these Balkan countries had been told, no doubt they would have raised a cry of "No division without representation"; but they were not even told.

Honour Among Thieves

Churchill and Stalin kept their respective bargains. When it looked as if the left-wing political party EAM, and its guerilla supporter ELAS, was going to take

power in Greece, Churchill ordered the British Army and the Royal Air Force into action; thus was Greece saved for its Anglo-American future. And not a word of protest came from Russia, or appeared in the Russian press. Similarly, when the Russian army of occupation in Rumania saw to it that the Communist Party took power and threw King Michael out, there was no interference from Britain.

All this is retold frankly by Churchill. Apparently his scorn for the workers is such that he has no fear of any adverse effect on morale in a Third World War; he is not afraid that the workers, having seen how hollow were the speeches made and articles written in the Second World War, might come to think that those in future wars were just as hypocritical. And such is the hold of propaganda on the mass of the working class, he is probably right.

JOSHUA.

SOME NOTES ON PARTY HISTORY—continued

At the inaugural meeting the E.C. had been instructed to open a fund for the purpose of establishing a Party Press and to submit a scheme in connection with this.

At the first E.C. meeting a committee of three was appointed to consider and report on the question of a Party Organ. It is curious to recall that until a few years ago the SOCIALIST STANDARD was always referred to as the "Party Organ."

The Committee eventually reported on the result of their enquiries to the E.C. meeting of the 30th July, 1904. In their report they stated that the cheapest estimate they had received was from Jacomb Bros., who quoted £7 10s. 6d. for 3,000 copies of an eight-page paper. The E.C. decided to accept this estimate, to go ahead if the money could be raised, and to find out if branches were in favour of publishing a journal without delay, and the extent to which they would be prepared to support the venture by cash guarantees from members and willingness to take quantities of the journal when issued.

The E.C. then came to the question of title. The following five proposals were submitted:—

- The Socialist News.
- The Socialist Standard.
- The Socialist Republic.
- The Red Flag.
- Socialism.

It was unanimously agreed to recommend to branches that the journal be called "Socialism."

A delegation of the E.C. visited all branches for the purpose of explaining the E.C.'s proposals with the object of raising funds to publish the paper as soon as possible.

The cash guarantees from members amounted to £4 13s. 6d.; Islington branch guaranteed to raise a further £9. The branches undertook to dispose of 1,300 copies monthly. It was then decided to issue the journal immediately. An Editorial and Management Committee of five members was appointed from the Executive Committee.

After receiving the votes of branches on the name

of the paper the E.C. found that four of the names received exactly the same number of votes. They then took a vote on the four names, the result of which was that "The Socialist Standard" was decided upon.

On the 1st September the first number of the SOCIALIST STANDARD came out. It contained eight pages; was four inches longer and an inch and a half wider than the present "S.S.," and had three columns to a page. Its price was one penny.

The first column on the front page contained an editorial from which we quote the following paragraph:

"In the Socialist Party of Great Britain we are all members of the working class, and cannot hope that our articles will always be finely phrased, but we shall endeavour to lay before you on every occasion a sane and sound pronouncement on all matters affecting the welfare of the working class. What we lack in refinement of style we shall make good by the depth of our sincerity and by the truth of our principles."

The paragraph that followed this contained a prophecy that, alas, has not yet come to pass.

"We shall, for the present, content ourselves with a monthly issue, but we are confident that the various demands upon us, by the quantity of matter at our disposal, and by the growth of the Party, will necessitate in the near future, a weekly issue of our paper."

At first articles were printed from non-members, but the confusion caused soon led to the decision to print only articles from members. The columns of the paper were always open, however, to opponents to express their criticism of the Party and its policy.

The printing of the paper was done by Jacomb Bros., one of whom, A. E. Jacomb, was a founder member of the Party. Some time in 1907 Jacomb Bros. ran into trouble. A. E. Jacomb had written a book on the Woman Question which did not find favour in government circles. This book was censored. The police visited the printing premises to seize unsold copies and destroy the type. In the process they "accidentally" smashed the printing machines and thereby put Jacomb Bros. out of business. However, in spite of many vicissitudes, A. E. Jacomb continued to handle the Party's printing. He had an original method of quoting. He found out what the other quota-

tions were and quoted less! He also forgot to send in his bill promptly and used to wait months for payment. By 1921 the burden became too much for him and he had to give up.

Two years after the SOCIALIST STANDARD commenced we ran into trouble—a libel action. The front page of the August 1906 number contained an article headed "Found Out." Underneath the title was a lengthy sub-title: "Labour Leaders Sell the Union Members and their Apologist Gets a Warm Reception." The article gave a report of a mass meeting at which Richard Bell, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, defended his and the Executive's action in accepting an arbitration finding in opposition to the decision of a conference of railwaymen. The SOCIALIST STANDARD containing this article was sent to all branches of the Railwaymen's Union. Bell took action against the Party for libel. At first writs were issued against each member of the Executive Committee. Eventually two of the members were accepted as defendants—Anderson and Fitzgerald—both of whom were out of work at the time. The proceedings dragged along for months. At last, on July 15th, 1907, the case came up before Mr. Justice Darling. Mr. C. F. Gill, K.C., with two other barristers, acted on behalf of Richard Bell, instructed by

his solicitors; Anderson and Fitzgerald conducted their own case. In summing up Mr. Justice Darling said that under the rules the Executive Committee were not bound to obey the majority of the members who were employed by the North-Eastern Railway and who voted on the question, but they had to consider the interests of the society as a whole. If the plaintiffs had not betrayed their trust they were entitled to a verdict.

What the jury thought, after hearing the case, may be gathered from the trifling nature of the damages. They found a verdict for the plaintiffs for 40s.!

The August 1907 number of the SOCIALIST STANDARD contains a report of the case. Some of the statements in that report are more libellous than the original article. The front page article on the case concludes with the remarks: "This is our first libel action, but it may not be our last. We will take that risk and others that may arise."

A well-dressed man, who had listened to the case, went over to Anderson and Fitzgerald afterwards and said to them, "You did very well boys"; then he gave them a sovereign to buy themselves drinks. What actually happened was the group of members who had turned up all went to a coffee shop and spent the money on a dinner.

GILMAC.

PASSING SHOW

Crime and Punishment

The recent campaign in the Soviet Union against crime, including the restoration of the death penalty for murder, is being taken in some circles to show that crime is something "inherent in human nature," and that the early Socialist pioneers were wrong when they said that in a Socialist society there would be no crime. But the people who take up this point of view do not see that in order for their reasoning to be valid, they must first show that there is a Socialist society in the Soviet Union. Far from the existence of crime proving anything about Socialism, it is itself another demonstration that there cannot be Socialism in Russia. The Stalinists themselves, who profess to believe that there is Socialism in Russia, abandon—as they have often done before—their materialist philosophy in order to explain it, and say it is due to elements which are corrupt or hostile to the regime. But before Socialism can be established, it is necessary to have a great majority who understand and want it, and to whom therefore the notion of crime is foreign; and Socialism will abolish crime because it will abolish the material conditions which cause it.

When Stalinists admit that there is crime in Russia they are admitting the falseness of their own view of the nature of Russian society.

On Guard

During the recent correspondence in *The Times* about the hydrogen bomb, one reader wrote that "the British Army remains unruffled. This last week-end I attended Territorial Army training—the morning was passed with lectures on the use and effect of the atomic bomb; in the afternoon we practised sword drill" (10-4-54). It is good to know that our generals are directing their minds to the problems that beset us.

Presumably, in the last ghastly moment of atomic annihilation, we are supposed to cry "Touché!" The present regime cannot guarantee that we will survive; but it is at least trying to teach us how to die like gentlemen.

JOSHUA.

A SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE NUMBER OF THE "SOCIALIST STANDARD"

In September, 1904, the first number of the "Socialist Standard" came out. This September we are bringing out a special number to commemorate fifty years of its existence.

The special number will have a colour-designed cover and will contain articles relating to our attitude to war in 1914 and 1939; Russia in 1917; the General Strike in 1926; The Woman Question, Ireland, etc., in the early years. There will also be articles on the Declaration of Principles; Style and Invective over the years; changes in theory, internally and externally; the Birth of the Party and the circumstances of the time; our attitude in the various elections from the early days; the world situation in 1904 and to-day; Propaganda in war time; some Reminiscences of members and events; and a number of other subjects.

This special number will contain 32 pages against the present 16 pages, and it is proposed to print 10,000 copies.

We want to make this a production worthy of the occasion and to do the job properly the estimated cost will be in the region of £300, and as the price of each copy will remain as at present the loss will run into over £200. We therefore appeal to members and sympathisers to send along as large donations as they can to enable us to fulfil our proposals. If we cannot raise enough money to carry out the proposals we will have to cut down our ideas.

Will members and sympathisers send along to the Party Treasurer, E. Lake, as much as they can immediately so that we will be in a position to know how much we can do to make the special number really worth while.

PUT ONE IN HIS LEG, ELLEN

The Case of Mickey Spillane

THE most startling mystery story writer in the publishing world today" has, the papers say, given it up. Well, time will show; in the meantime, his seven novels go on selling and his film goes on showing.

Mickey Spillane found fame as nearly overnight as makes no difference. His first book, "I The Jury," was published in 1949; his fifth, two years later, sold two and a half million copies at the first printing in America. In this country, where the reading public borrows rather than buys its fiction, something over a quarter of a million Spillane novels have been sold. To call them mystery stories is misleading; they belong to the literary genre known as "toughies," and the mysteries are only less transparent than the heroines' dresses.

The aim of the "toughies" is to assault the senses, chiefly through the description of sex and violence (together or separately, and in every conceivable form). Malevolence, brutality and lust are the unvarying subject-matter; everything is larger than life and only half as natural. The style of writing is a magnifying glass held to the profusion of erotic incident. Its facile craftsmanship—extraordinary in its technical excellence, and as unrelated to art as a chorus girl is to a ballerina—leaves no effect unexploited. Spillane reduces description to a series of simple, evocative metaphors; buildings are "towering canyons," a bridge "a spidery steel skeleton." Incident is iterated and reiterated to impress by cumulation, as in this passage from "One Lonely Night":

"Two murders. Two green cards.
It was the same way backwards Two green cards
and two murders.

Which came first, the murders or the cards?
Murder at odd angles. Two murders. Eight odd angles.
Yes, two murders. The fat boy got what he was after.
Because of him the girl was murdered no matter how.
So I got him. I was a murderer like they said, only it
was different. I was just a killer."

It is the school of journalism's sixth-form stuff, a tale told in headlines. The stories unroll rather than unfold with scarcely ever a pause; something is always happening—generally something unpleasant.

The Mickey Spillane novels represent the latest stage in the development of the thriller, which practically dates from the Industrial Revolution. Its original form, the Gothic novel, derived from the sentimental reaction against the rapid onset of the machine age—a mediævalist enthusiasm which, running through literature, painting and architecture, enthroned ruins, broken traceries and ivy-clad towers as symbols of romance, beauty and freedom. From a revolt against restraint and ugliness, however, it became a drug for minds bored and uneasy; the ruins became popular literary settings where—to quote from one of the novels—"horrid noises and still more horrid sights were heard and beheld." The new conditions of town life and the division of labour were—and are—responsible for the lack of variety and emotional satisfaction that in its turn created a demand for vicarious satisfaction, even though the mass reading public had yet to come

into being. Some of the titles tell their own stories: "The Nocromancer," "The Mysterious Warning," "Who's the Murderer?" and "Horrid Mysteries."

With the development of the centralized State, the main stream of thrillers gradually evolved from simple eeriness, through crime stories where graduated exercises in legal justice were performed, to Sherlock Holmes. Holmes embodied all the social ideals of his time; a townsman of remarkable individuality, contemplative, a scientist yet something of an aesthete too, thrusting at crime and recalcitrancy with the sure lance of logic that the Queen's subjects might ride at peace in their hansoms. The police, agents of a still immature State machine, were clumsy accessories to Holmes's analytical feats, even though the ultimate glory was theirs. Thirty years later, however, crime stories had a new maestro—"Edgar Wallace for thrills," the yellow covers said—and in his novels the police were supreme. The formula was much the same—crime, mystery, clues and climax—but the social setting had changed. Science, which afforded Holmes his weighty deductions and his monographs on dust and cigarette ash, now had produced fast cars, telephones and forensic laboratories; Liberalism was slipping fast into its grave, and the State had become more efficient, more powerful and more impersonal. Even the language had changed; the leisurely prose and the meticulously reasoned explanations which held Watson spellbound had given place to the slick, terse narrative of modern popular journalism.

Whatever the other differences between these writers and Mickey Spillane, one is paramount. The "toughies" are all violence; Conan Doyle and Wallace never considered it. Few of the Sherlock Holmes stories have murder as their cause, and some do not even involve any criminal offence. The master criminal, Moriarty, is an intellectual megalomaniac, representing possibly another facet of the same social ideals. Almost the same may be said of Wallace's books. His characters are more sophisticated, but little less pacific; the most frequent crime is burglary, and at least one of Wallace's thrillers does not deal with crime at all.

The "toughies" arose in America in the late nineteen-thirties, though the most famous early exponent, James Hadley Chase, was not an American. Their style owed much to Hemingway and the other realist writers, their content to "True Police Cases" and "Real Crime Stories." Reference has already been made to the mode of writing. It is writing for an age of speed, aiming at quick impact through simple graphic images and emotion-laden phrases, its staccato sentences echoing the rattle of the typewriter. Everyone calls everyone else a bastard; everything is told brusquely and forcefully in such terms as "She gave him the drink in the eyes, glass and all" or "If he tries to scam, put one in his leg, Ellen."

There is an obvious debt, too, to the films—though its nature is not quite so obvious. In recent years "toughies" have come to the screen, but it was the classic gangster films of twenty or so years ago that

established and popularised the conventions of the fabulous gangster world. Essentially, those films were "horse operas" in disguise, with Buicks instead of snow-white steeds, gats instead of six-guns, racketeers instead of rustlers and crap games instead of rodeos. Apart from the properties and conventions, the films' biggest influence on the tough gangster story has been a matter of technique of narration: the close-up, the heightening of sensation by viewing from unusual angles, the dramatic possibilities of swift cutting and so on.

There are two outstanding motifs in the Mickey Spillane novels: stimulation, and escape into a world not far away where desires are realised. The two are interwoven—take this passage from "The Big Kill":

"The little guy stared too long. He should have been watching my face. I snapped the side of the rod across his jaw and laid the flesh open to the bone. He dropped the sap and staggered into the big boy with a scream starting to come up out of his throat only to get it cut off in the middle as I pounded his teeth back into his mouth with the end of the barrel. The big guy tried to shove him out of the way. He got so mad he came right at me with his head down and I took my own damn time about kicking him in the face. He smashed into the door and lay bubbling. So I kicked him again and he stopped bubbling."

Plenty of stimulation, for those who want it; and a phantasy—helped by the use of the first person—of revenge for the humiliations of everyday life in an unequal world.

By the same token, there is little room for thought or knowledge in Spillane's world. Mike Hammer, the moronic private detective of the novels, is guided by drums pounding in his ears that tell him he must kill: "I make my own rules as I go along and I don't have to account to anybody." The rules allow all-in beatings-up, slappings-down and tuppings, and strictly exclude mental holds.

The innumerable sexual adventures of Spillane's surly Samsons are unvarying variants on a single theme—domination over beautiful women. The girls are always over-developed both physically and emotionally; a jerk of the head brings them running and a shake of the head leaves them waiting. Thus, Mike Hammer and the brunette from Texas:

"She said 'Mike...' again and struck the match. . . . There was only the sheet over her that rose and dipped between the inviting hollows of her breasts. Ellen was beautiful as only a mature woman can be beautiful. She was lustful as only a mature woman can be lustful."

"Tuck me in, Mike."
The match burned closer to my fingers. I reached down and got the corner of the sheet in my fingers and flipped it all the way back. She lay there beautiful and naked and waiting.

"I love brunettes," I said.

The tone of my voice told her no, not tonight. . . . Opportunity, as they say, would be a fine thing; and that, presumably, is what the reader feels.

What distinguishes Mickey Spillane's novels from others of their kind is the occasional interpolation of a crude philosophy, spoken in the first person, justifying the brutality and all the rest. Apart from adding a little in the way of realism, these discourses are curiously near the truth. For example:

"He had to go back five years to a time he knew of only second-hand and tell me how it took a war to show me the power of the gun and the obscene pleasure

that was brutality and force, the spicy sweetness of murder sanctified by law.

That was me. I could have made it sound better if I'd said it. There in the muck and slime of the jungle. . . . I had gotten the taste of death and found it palatable to the extent that I could never again eat the fruits of a normal civilization."

Spillane—who was a wartime pilot, and is a Jehovah's Witness—plainly identifies himself with his heroes. His photograph on the jackets is almost a reconstruction from Mike Hammer's self-descriptions; the name is the same, and there are several references to his war service.

It is clearly intended that the reader, too, should identify himself with the hero. Every kind of herd prejudice is appealed to. "One Lonely Night," written in 1951, is a fierce attack on Communism. There is not the faintest indication of what Communism is about, only a Black-Hand-Gang atmosphere. The Communists' headquarters is straight out of a boys' adventure yarn, with maps and secret plans and microfilmed documents, and the conspirators themselves are all so vividly labelled—long hair, sinister looks, etc.—that one wonders they dare walk down the street. But, whatever they were up to, Mike deals with them. McCarthy is weak stuff compared with Mike. Mike shoots the lot.

Why has all this come to be? Why are violence, prejudice and near-pornography best-sellers in the civilised world in 1954? Partial answers have already been given; the whole answer is that the "toughies," like all popular reading matter, mirror the consciousness of the age. Nothing in Mickey Spillane is immoral—nothing, that is, conflicts with the commonly held ideals and behaviour-patterns of our time. The brutality is used by "good" against "evil"; the ends justify the means, say the mores of modern society. If the big bombs are justified by their purpose, it is hardly in proportion to complain of Mike Hammer's gun. Spillane himself says much the same thing when he writes of "murder sanctified by law." The State everywhere trains killers—and they kill because, like Mike Hammer, they have been given strong enough prejudices.

As for the sex, that goes with the rest. The family is no longer the stable, carefully preserved group of the days of Gothic romance. Lust goes hand in hand with violence, and violence is always incipient in our power-ridden, war-haunted world. Socialists want to change it for a world in which "The Big Kill" won't exist—the Mickey Spillane sort, nor the nuclear fission sort.

R. COSTER.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

1904 — 1954

50th ANNIVERSARY RALLY

ST. PANCRAS TOWN HALL,

EUSTON ROAD, N.W.1

(Opposite St. Pancras Station)

SUNDAY, JUNE 13th, 7 p.m.

All Welcome.

Questions and Discussion.

EQUALITY MEANS DIVERSITY

SOcialism—the society we desire and work for—means a world in which all people will be social equals. There will be no owners of property and no non-owners, no rich and no poor, neither superior nor inferior classes, “races” or sexes. Why, it may be asked, is such a state of affairs desirable?

There is, of course, one very obvious answer. It will give better material conditions to those who now go hungry, badly clothed or poorly housed—in short, to those who suffer any form of poverty. It is the expression of their demand, as Oscar Wilde put it, to be seated at the board instead of being grateful for the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table.

The justice of the claim to better living conditions is seldom disputed; it is only opposed on allegedly practical grounds. No one (except, possibly, the religious fanatic) says that he would wish the hungry to remain hungry. Instead it is claimed that there is “just not enough food to go round.” If the prime social mover were satisfaction of people's needs, all forms of poverty would quickly melt in the warm sun of common humanity.

Unfortunately, the existence of class society based on property deflects the human purpose, which is to live fully and harmoniously. Men and women who enter into the antagonistic relationships of master to slave (lord to serf, capitalist to worker, etc.) are denied the opportunities of human development which only equality can bring.

“Free access to what is needed” is a feature of socialist society which contrasts markedly with the un-free access allowed in property-based society. Property is restrictive; its institutions are concerned with guarding the rights of exclusive possession. But the guard who watches a prisoner becomes almost as much a prisoner as the prisoner himself. To be a member of a dominant class may be vastly preferable to being a subject—but it is no substitute for living in equalitarian society.

Socialism is needed for the full development of the human personality. People who are denied direct participation in living (apart from merely existing) must to-day accept spurious substitutes. In place of useful and satisfying work, there is the need to sell your energies as a commodity on the labour market; in place of creative leisure (which should be continuous with work) there is an entertainment industry seeking to sell you a good time by proxy; in place of living with people whose interests and outlook you share, there is either the family (economic unit) or the impersonality of being some form of paying guest. The mental problems of the latter type are not really separable from the physical needs to which the term “poverty” more usually refers.

Most people are more or less aware of the poverty of the capitalist way of life. This awareness often takes the form of a feeling of frustration, of wanting something different without really knowing what it is or how to get it. To some extent, this is mitigated by the growth of the means of mass influence—newspapers, cinema, radio, television—so that everyone knows that

there are millions of others who are also “tuned in” to the same influences and are, so to speak, in the same boat. If it is customary to want to win the football pools, for example, there is also a feeling of solidarity among the countless losers making the best of things until next Saturday.

One way in which an individual overcomes the feeling of insignificance, in comparison with what he feels to be the power of forces outside himself, is by conforming to them. He ceases to be himself; he adopts entirely the kind of personality offered to him by cultural patterns, and he therefore becomes exactly as all others are and as they expect him to be. The American *National Comic Weekly* assures us that the four out of five adults who read comics “live with the personalities. They take their habits from them. They wear what they wear, eat what they eat, and talk like them, and even act like them.” This appears to be a typical over-statement on the part of those who are concerned to make the greatest claims on behalf of their product, in this case, the comics.

It is significant that most aspects of our lives have that “mass-produced” look. It is not just the material things that are stereotyped. Take a few random examples. Our humour is repetitive, our entertainment “canned,” and our sport actively engaged in by a tiny minority with the rest as passive spectators. There are a few individual artists—and countless impersonators and impressionists, intentional or otherwise. Last year every girl looked like Elizabeth Taylor (well, tried to, anyway)—this year we are assured that every girl is to appear as another Audrey Hepburn. The dull uniformity of male garb is notorious, and even the sartorial rebels conform to the prevailing fashion of rebellion. Perhaps these are some of the least harmful ways in which monotony expresses itself but, in being taken for granted, they may not be recognised as part of commodity-living.

The capacity for original thinking is stultified in present society. The fact that aspects of our “private lives” become typical questions on which experts and guidance councils pronounce opinion encourages the view that the problems of social life are too complicated for the average man or woman to grasp. The popularity of various kinds of readers' advice columns in the newspapers and magazines testifies to the willingness and even anxiety of people to consult the specialist or leave it to the experts—“Gods With Heads of Clay,” as we called them last month in another connection.

It can probably be accounted a growth in human freedom that to-day our lives are shaped by anonymous authorities like “public opinion” and “common sense” rather than by dictators in person. But the socialist way of life, in which all people will participate as equals, stands quite apart from any such forms of compulsion. It is the overcoming of a set of social relationships, of a system which discourages people from trusting their own capacity to think about those problems that really matter.

We have said that Socialism will develop human personality. We must confess to having no definite

ideas of what particular form this personality will take. Our goal is not so much an ideal of perfection as a condition for free development. It must be sufficient for us to catch glimpses of the future in the ideas and actions of people to-day. We know that where interests are in harmony people work together with a will. To-day antagonistic interests predominate. We know that, given half a chance, most of us want to express ourselves in some artistic way (in the widest sense of the term). To-day we must earn a living. The growth of socialist ideas means an increase in the number of people who understand society, in the dual sense of knowing how to abolish property and how to really live without it.

It may be that the cynic will remark that a world

without the excitement of war, the pride of possessing property, and the delight in human inequality will be a dull place indeed. In dismissing the first two of these conditions as psychological perversions, we are not in any way passing judgment on individuals—only on the social system. To those who get to know about Socialism there is something exciting and rather wonderful about the prospect of all people living in co-operative harmony and on terms of equality. We have tried to show that, far from making people equal in the sense of *being the same*, Socialism offers the prospect of a richly variegated society—how can it be otherwise when human needs, among which is *variety*, are the prime consideration?

S. R. P.

MR. ENIGMA

ONCE again he's in the news. Once again his name is plastered across the front pages of the national newspapers. Once again he is accused by his Labour colleagues of splitting the party ranks. Once again he has given his opponents scope to make political capital out of his manoeuvres. His supporters applaud, his enemies jeer, he is at the same time a political opportunist, a public-spirited citizen, a Russian agent, and a man of principle. Mr. Aneurin Bevan, the enigma of British politics has returned to the arena.

The first shot was fired in the House of Commons on Tuesday, 15th April. In the debate which followed Mr. Eden's announcement “that he and Mr. Dulles were ready to examine the possibilities of a defence pact in South-East Asia” (*News Chronicle*, 14/4/54), “Mr. Bevan has brusquely forced his way to the dispatch box to announce stringent criticism of a proposal which Mr. Attlee had, to a large degree, accepted” (*News Chronicle*, 15/4/54).

The following day Mr. Bevan resigned from the Labour Party Shadow Cabinet, and the rift in the Labour ranks, opened on the previous evening, was complete.

Explaining the reasons for his resignation, Mr. Bevan said, “I was deeply shocked at the failure of the Parliamentary leadership to immediately repudiate Mr. Eden's acceptance of the American initiative, which is tantamount to the diplomatic and military encirclement of Republican China. This in my opinion prejudices, if it does not entirely frustrate, the possibility of a negotiated settlement at Geneva of the Indo-Chinese war. If the Conservative Government is prepared to follow the American lead in this matter, in my view the British Labour Party should stand steadfastly against it” (*News Chronicle*, 15/4/54).

Mr. Bevan's first major disagreement with the official party line occurred in 1950 when he resigned from the Cabinet after differences in opinion on the sum to be spent on defence. Here it is interesting to note that Mr. Bevan was not objecting to the principle of defence expenditure, but only on the amount to be spent. In a similar manner people agitate to have the use of atomic weapons prohibited, whilst at the same time turning a blind eye to war in other forms.

Subsequently Mr. Bevan's differences with “the right wing” of the Labour Party became subordinate to

the need for greater unity within the movement. Now, however, Mr. Bevan has erupted once again.

It is not for this writer, nor indeed the S.P.G.B., to criticise Mr. Bevan's actions. We are not concerned with discussing the merits of the proposed plan for South-East Asia. These problems may be resolved, but in their very solution they will breed new problems. Capitalism by its very nature periodically produces booms, slumps, wars, and unemployment, and all the other social ills of this day and age. Mr. Bevan and his fellow Parliamentarians may be credited with the best intentions in the world, but from time to time they find themselves in the unenviable position of having to run Capitalism from the Government benches. It is then that personalities and party politics count for little. Capitalism sweeps them all along leaving a trail of misery and devastation in its wake.

When the working class understand the nature of society; when they appreciate that society is run not in their interests, but in the interests of the owners of the means of production and distribution for the purpose of producing commodities for sale at a profit; when realisation of this one fact opens the way to a conscious understanding of the position of the working class in society; when the moment of truth transpires: the working class will not turn to the Bevan, Attlees, Churchills or Edens of the world. They will elect representatives to Parliament to end this viperous system Capitalism, and establish Socialism.

MICHAEL D. GILL.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JUNE,



1954

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

OUR FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

THIS month our Party has been in existence for fifty years. Fifty years of persistent, single-minded and uncompromising propaganda without ever swerving from the path we set out upon, the path to Socialism. Along that path we have met the laughter, the jeers and the revilings of those who claimed that we were impractical chasers of dreams. The parties that contained those who laughed, reviled and jeered have either passed out of existence or lost their old identities in the swamps of capitalism. The fire-eaters of yesterday have become the practical politicians of to-day, immersed in the problem of running capitalism more efficiently.

In the course of these fifty years there have been many and shattering changes in the world but none of these changes have in any way affected the soundness of the Party's fundamental outlook. The Declaration of Principles formulated in 1904 still provides the anchor that has kept the Party solid and safe through the storms of two world wars and the treacherous calms of peace times.

When the Party was formed the British Empire was looked upon as the greatest empire the world had ever known. At that time the maps of the world showed nearly a quarter of the land surface painted with the red that denoted British hegemony and on the sea, well, "Britain Ruled the Waves"! Germany was moving upwards and threatening British trade in a development that eventually led to the head-on collision in 1914. In the East the vast ramshackle Empire of the Czars, built upon the ruthless exploita-

tion of the peasants, spread like a semi-feudal blight. China, still steeped in the customs of olden times, was a promising field of plunder for western trading brigands, whilst Japan was struggling into the sphere of the modern powers. India, with its teeming population, was lying somewhat uncomfortably in the lap of British imperialism and its Durbars were splendid circuses for the edification of its Western rulers. America was too busily employed building from within to exercise much influence outside the American continent. Big business was building up internal fortunes for those who were riding on the rush to mechanise American industry. Standard Oil was one of the few American enterprises that spread its tentacles over the outside world.

The movement that went by the name of "Socialist" was mainly a hotch-potch of nationalist and state-ownership ideas that gave some lip-service to Marxism. In Germany this movement had a large body of adherents, and in France it was fairly strong, but elsewhere it exerted little influence. In England its supporters could only be numbered in hundreds.

What vast changes have come over the world since those days! The British Empire is a thing of the past, India and China have awakened from their slumbers and become powerful states, the empire of the Czars has been replaced by a ruthless dictatorship that has mechanised Russia and built it up into a first class imperialist power challenging America for world supremacy. All over the world the sometime backward countries are rapidly overtaking the erstwhile leaders and building up societies split into the familiar western type of workers and capitalists. In the course of these changes "Labour" has come to power in various regions and revealed the emptiness of the claim that Labour Parties were out to build a new world in which the workers would find comfort and security. Wherever Labour Governments have come to power they have acted in just the same way as avowed capitalist governments: they have administered capitalism in the interests of those who own the means and instruments of wealth production. To the workers the change in government has made no fundamental difference.

The facts of history have proved that we were right in our outlook and in our criticisms. In face of this we urge workers to study the position we have been putting forward for fifty years for it is the only position, the only solution to the problems of today that offers the workers hope. We have kept steadfastly to this position for fifty years because we know that Socialism is the system of society that will bring comfort and security for all mankind.

Finally, we are what we were and we will remain what we are.

Correction

In the obituary notice in last month's *SOCIALIST STANDARD* relating to F. Foan it was stated that Foan and Fitzgerald worked together at the Battersea Polytechnic. We are informed by his daughter that it was not the Battersea Polytechnic but the School of Building at Brixton where they worked together.

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY—8

MÜNZER AND THE THURINGIAN REVOLT

EIGHT thousand men were on a hill near Frankenhäusen listening to a speech from their leader. They had fortified themselves behind a barricade of farm waggons and carts and, during the period of a truce arranged with their foes, they were debating the terms of surrender offered them.

At the foot of this hill, the Schlachberg, was encamped a well-armed and disciplined army, also of eight thousand men, led by the Duke of Saxony, the Duke of Brunswick and the Landgraf of Hesse. On the 15th of May, 1525, the dukes had granted the truce to the army of ill-armed peasants and workers on the hill-top, to give them time to consider the terms offered, unconditional submission and the surrender of the peasants' leaders, particularly Thomas Münzer.

Some of the insurgents on the hill were for accepting the terms in the face of the formidable opposition lined up against them. Münzer had the two foremost advocates of surrender beheaded and then proceeded to harangue his following. He denounced the enemy with more than his accustomed vehemence, he made rousing allusions to Biblical heroes, how small forces of chosen people had conquered hosts and he concluded by pointing to a rainbow that appeared, just at the moment, as an omen of success.

Before the period of the truce had expired, and whilst the peasant army was still unprepared, the enemy opened cannon fire on their camp and charged through the barricade, mowing down the defenceless peasants left and right, pursuing those who escaped into the town of Frankenhäusen where the massacre continued. Münzer was discovered in hiding and, after a period of imprisonment and a letter of "confession" to his followers, he was beheaded. So ended the most significant battle of the German Peasants' War.

The Middle Ages closed on a scene of economic transformation. Commercial activity was shaking the foundations of the feudal system. The feudal peasant and the feudal lord had obligations to one another and the peasant had a measure of security together with a limitation to the degree of exploitation to which he was subject. This was changing to a system of merciless exploitation where taxes, tithes, etc., were continually increased and new methods ever being devised to extract more surplus wealth from the peasantry, which the feudal lord could change into florins, guilders or ducats. Common land was seized and tenant farms confiscated thus giving rise to a class of proletarian cotters.

This increase in exploitation and oppression gave rise to the great peasant revolts throughout Europe at the end of the Middle Ages. The peasants, armed with spears and axes, rose against their tormentors in France in the 1350's, in England in the 1380's, in Germany throughout the fifteenth century culminating in the Peasants' War of 1525, and later in Sweden and Denmark.

The economic changes gave rise to a confused mass of conflicting interests. The nobility, the peasantry, the merchants, the artisans, the proletarians, the wealthy

priesthood and the poor wandering priests, all had interests peculiar to their own grouping. But through these various oppositions there was a dividing line that gave the majority of the people a mutually common enemy—the Catholic Church. The wealthy, grasping Catholic Church, centralised at Rome, was regarded by all strata of society as the exploiter par excellence, sucking wealth from all sections of the community and pipe-lining it over the Alps to the Papal headquarters.

On the 31st of October, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the church at Wittenburg and gave impetus to a movement which took him and others along with it. Luther started by fighting only against the excesses of the Catholic Church but was carried along by the current to urge violence and the use of fire and iron for the extermination of the cancer that he said was destroying the world.

The struggle that developed was between the Catholic conservatives on the one hand and an alliance of middle-class reformers and revolutionary peasants and proletarians on the other. The peasants at the outset aimed at a re-establishment of their feudal liberties. The famous twelve points around which most of the German peasant revolts centred are evidence of the outlook. Condensed they were:

1. Religious toleration.
2. Abolition of tithes.
3. Interest to be limited to 5 per cent.
4. All water to be free.
5. All woods and forests to be free.
6. All game to be free.
7. Abolition of villeinage.
8. No obedience to a lord, only to the emperor.
9. Re-establishment of old-time justice.
10. The right to elect persons in authority.
11. Abolition of death dues.
12. Re-establishment of the common lands that had been appropriated.

As the revolt grew, large sections of the peasants accepted and supported the communistic teachings of men like Thomas Münzer and Nicolas Storch. The middle-class allies drew away from these communist groupings and Luther turned on them ferociously, urging the nobles and merchants to strangle the peasants as they would mad dogs.

Münzer's teaching, like all teaching of the time, was cloaked by religion. Freedom and Equality must reign on earth. The princes and the nobles denied freedom and equality to the poor, so they must be overthrown and the "common man" must be raised in their place. This was the kingdom of God and all who would not become citizens must be killed or banished. The great barrier to a real awakening of the inward light was the riches of the world. So, in the kingdom of God, there must be no private wealth. All things must be held in common. That was the essence of the teaching that caused thousands of peasants to flock around Münzer.

After a brief and adventurous career (he was only 28 years of age when he was executed) Münzer made

his headquarters in Muhlhausen, where he joined forces with Heinrich Pfeiffer, an ex-monk who was the preacher and leader of the local merchant guildsmen and artisans. Pfeiffer and Münzer with their joint forces overthrew the patrician council that governed Muhlhausen and established themselves as benevolent dictators of the town and surrounding districts. Münzer proceeded to put his communist teachings into practice. He took over the Johanniterhof, the monastery of the monks of St. John, and established an equalitarian organisation holding its wealth in common. Thousands of peasants from the surrounding countryside flocked to the town where Münzer preached to them from the Marienkirche, sending out missionaries to the districts around. The communist agitation spread to Erfurt, Coburg and into Hesse and Brunswick.

During the two months of Münzer's regime in Muhlhausen, Pfeiffer with a large section of the town population, concerned themselves not with communist ideas but with their own local revolt and establishing their own power in the local government. When word was received that the armies of the Dukes were marching against the town and Münzer took his force out to meet them, Pfeiffer remained inactive inside the walls of the town.

A body of Münzer's followers were encamped on the hill outside Frankenhausen and he marched his poorly armed and untrained force to support them. It was here that he met the military defeat that ended his career and his life. The Dukes then turned on Muhlhausen where most of Pfeiffer's supporters deserted him in terror and surrendered the town. Pfeiffer was

pursued, captured and, with Münzer, tortured and beheaded.

Münzer had visions of a universal social revolution and he was one of the few leaders of the Peasant War who tried to bring unity into the German peasants' movement by establishing communications between centres. His teachings expressed the vague desires of a vital section of the society of his day. Through him they were given a certain definiteness and in every great social convulsion since his day those ideas arise until they merge into the ideas of the working class of to-day.

History abounds with examples of revolutionary classes seeking and using the support of workers and peasants to gain their ends then turning ferociously on them when they start to voice aspirations of their own. Martin Luther offers an outstanding example. His words when the peasant revolts were being suppressed show his spite and viciousness.

"... the murderous and plundering hordes of the peasants. They should be knocked to pieces, strangled and stabbed, secretly and openly, by everybody who can do it, just as one must kill a mad dog. Therefore, dear gentlemen, hearken here, save there, stab, knock, strangle them at will, and if thou diest thou art blessed; no better death canst thou ever attain."

(The Peasant War in Germany, by F. Engels.)

Books to Read:

- The Peasant War in Germany by Frederick Engels.
- The Peasants' War in Germany 1525-1526 by E. Belfort Bax.
- Essay, "The Reformation" in "Crises in European History" by Gustav Bang.

W. WATERS.

ABOUT BOOKS

Is it possible to establish Socialism in one part of the world whilst the remainder stays predominantly capitalist? That question is right in the forefront to-day. One hundred and thirty years ago the topical question was, "Is it possible to establish Socialism in one part of the country whilst Capitalism prevails in the remainder?" The change in the form of this question since the early days of the last century, gives a clue to its answer. The development of Capitalism, with the close knitting together of all the corners of the earth, has caused men to leave behind the parochial outlook of the 1820's as they will ultimately discard their present nationalist one.

The Socialism of first half of the nineteenth century was a different proposition to the Socialism that we expound to-day. Marx and Engels labelled it "Utopian Socialism." The amount of literature that the Utopian Socialists turned out and the general extent of their propaganda was astounding. They developed some fantastic pictures of a future society and planned to set up Co-operative communities in various parts of this country, anticipating that these communities would eventually squeeze capitalism out of existence. Such ideas were the product of the early days of industrial capitalism and denote the immaturity of the working class of the time.

But the propaganda of the "Utopians" had a very useful critical element. They attacked every principle

and institution of capitalist society and the ideas they propounded were instrumental in forming and clarifying the thinking of their successors, including Marx and Engels.

The foremost names amongst the "Utopians" are St. Simon, Fourier and Robert Owen. But one of the most able and energetic propagandists of the time was William Thompson, an Irish landowner, who devoted his life to the movement.

"William Thompson (1775-1833), Britain's Pioneer Socialist, Feminist, and Co-operator," by Richard K. P. Pankhurst, has been published by Watts & Co. at 15s.

Mr. Pankhurst traces the life of Thompson from his birth in Cork in 1775 to his death on 28th March, 1833, at Rosscarbery and in doing so he introduces us to the personalities, the arguments and the struggles of the first co-operative societies. Thompson is shown to be an outstanding thinker of his day and the evidence is presented in the numerous and illuminating quotes from his works that sprinkle the pages of this book. Thompson's main writings were four books, "An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth" (1824), "Appeal of One Half of the Human Race, Women, Against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men, to Restrain Them in Political and Thence in Civil and Domestic Slavery" (1825), "Labour Rewarded—the Claims of Labour and Capital Conciliated;

or How to Secure to Labour the Whole Product of its Exertions" (1827) and, finally, "Practical Directions for the Speedy and Economical Establishment of Communities, on the Principle of Mutual Co-operation, United Possessions and Equality of Exertions and of the Means of Enjoyment" (1830).

The extracts from these works indicate that Thompson was in advance of other prominent economists and philosophers of his time—such as James Mill, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill and Robert Owen. He was the only one of the "Utopian Socialists" who clearly saw the class division of society, the need for the abolition of property and, especially, the need for political action on the part of the workers.

The final chapters of Mr. Pankhurst's book are devoted to showing the influence that Thompson had on his contemporaries and successors, in particular on Karl Marx. The author quotes many sources from individuals who have claimed at one extreme that Marx absorbed Thompson's ideas, lock, stock and barrel, to the other extreme that Thompson had but a fleeting

influence on Marx. Probably the most level statement is one attributed to Schumpeter:

"The Socialist thinkers of the nonage provided many a brick and many a tool that proved useful later on. After all, the very idea of a Socialist society was their creation, and it was owing to their efforts that Marx and his contemporaries were able to discuss it as a thing familiar to everyone. Many of the Utopians went much farther. They worked out details of the Socialist plan, thereby formulating problems—however inadequately—and clearing much ground. Even their contribution to purely economic analysis cannot be neglected. It provided a much needed leaven in an otherwise stodgy pudding and stood Marx in good stead."

We can commend Mr. Pankhurst's book. It has involved a lot of research and is interestingly written, presenting a heap of information in a pleasurable style. We would suggest that a preliminary reading of Frederick Engels, "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific" and "The Communist Manifesto" by Marx and Engels will ensure that the reader gets this life of William Thompson in perfect perspective.

W. WATERS.

GENEVA AND INDO-CHINA

THE political all-in wrestling match which has been taking place at Geneva has been the focal point for the eyes of the world. It is not a simple struggle between two opposing sides but a free-for-all for any group with vested interests in S.E. Asia and/or world strategy. The various claims and counter-claims, the advances, retreats, feints, side-steps and trials of strength that precede the really getting down to grips have taken place in the glare of publicity and propaganda, although there is, in addition, the backstairs double-dealing and secret alignments which will, in due course, when put to practical use in the negotiating, have such telling effects. It is understandable that people should take an interest in the goings-on in Geneva, for it is in such trials of strength over the division and redistribution of shares of wealth, which have been produced by the workers for their masters, that groupings of powers are formed which could plunge us into another war. For this fight at Geneva differs from some all-in wrestling bouts in that here the fight is a genuine one, with no holds barred.

The Viet-Minh

But there is a fresh young claimant in the ring challenging the French title to Indo-China—the native capitalists. Their interests are represented by the nationalist organisation known by its abbreviated name of Viet-minh, whose chief representative is the so-called Communist, Ho-chi-ming.

Viet-nam is the name given to the combined countries of Tongkin in the north, the empire of Annam in the centre and the former French colony of Cochinchina in the south. "Viet-nam for the Vietnamese" is one of the slogans of the nationalists. By this they really mean that the native ruling-class wish to exploit the workers there without having to share the loot with any other group. This attitude has the sympathy of many of the native governments of Asia who have only recently ousted the hated foreign masters themselves and one of them, India, has offered to act as referee

at the Conference in order to help resolve the difference so that the claimants will not resort to war.

The internal situation of Viet-nam is complicated by the unrest in the native people and their desire for land reform. The native farmers operate such small segments of land and with insufficient capital that after they have paid the extortionate interest to the money-lenders there is usually insufficient left to maintain them in health. This, and the impact of revolutionary ideas inseparable from capitalism, have made of these people a force that must be placated. The Viet-minh have won their support by promising them reform if the Party succeed in seizing the reins of government.

Viet-nam

The existing native government, usually referred to in the newspapers as Viet-nam, headed by Emperor Bao Dai, is under the influence of the French. This puppet government tries unsuccessfully to steer a course which will satisfy firstly the foreign exploiters who hold much of the military power, secondly, that portion of the native ruling-class who wish for a greater measure of control for themselves but are prepared to leave the responsibility of keeping order to the French, and, thirdly, a native working population seething with unrest.

Russia

Though far removed geographically from the scene in S.E. Asia, the large and expanding economy of the U.S.S.R. has a vital interest in world strategy and it is this interest which may be affected by the forthcoming division of spoils being negotiated at Geneva. For France is a member of the European Defence Committee which seeks to combine those with a common interest in opposing the expansion of the Russian spheres of influence in Europe. The preoccupation with the trouble in Indo-China has, by weakening France, thereby weakened E.D.C. It is in the interests of the U.S.S.R. that the French and the other allied

powers are pre-occupied with Asia for as long as possible. The Russians have practically nothing at stake there and thus gain greater freedom of action in Europe.

America

American interests are affected on two counts. One by reason of world strategy and the other arises from the need to safeguard their investments in S.E. Asia.

The American ruling-class regard Indo-China and Korea as bulwarks of democracy against the spread of Communism. To bring such high-sounding ideology down to earth it means that American capitalists wish to prevent their opposite numbers in China and Russia from extending their control of any more markets, sources of raw materials and exploitation of workers, at the expense of American-dominated Western Capitalism.

Apart from a considerable American investment in the French war in Indo-China the American government has invested in next-door neighbour Siam, which has a 900-mile river frontier with Indo-China. If Indo-China passes into the control of a hostile power Siam might be menaced too, and the Americans have no intention of allowing this to happen if they can avoid it.

Between Viet-nam and Siam lie the Buddhist kingdoms of Laos and Cambodia, both comparatively weak through being but sparsely populated, and almost undeveloped from the Capitalists' viewpoint.

With the absence of dangerous revolutionary ideas—and any political unrest—these two countries, therefore, make an ideal buffer state to protect American investment in Siam and this indicates the policy the U.S.A. may pursue at Geneva.

Great Britain

British Capitalism has different interests again and therefore employs different methods to attain these ends. Having a long experience in the East, H.M. Government uses this superiority with telling effect against its rivals in the ring. For instance, probably realising that Dien Bien Phu was past help anyway, they refused any co-operation with the American proposal to despatch without delay all possible air help to the French troops, but giving as their reason that they did not wish to jeopardise the Conference.

The American embargo on war materials to China was evaded by the British, according to American charges, by shipping these goods to the British colony of Hongkong and then transferring them across the common frontier with China.

The British Capitalists have much invested in some of the countries of S.E. Asia but particularly in the mines and plantations of Malaya. Here there is guerrilla fighting with the adherents of the Communist Party among the large Chinese minority living in Malaya who have been trying to oust the British and seize power. But the Chinese Communist Party has steadfastly refused to assist their comrades in Malaya in any way, although by reason of British diplomatic representation in Peking, they are entitled to establish consulates throughout Malaya. Consulates are recognised channels for assistance to fifth-columnists else-

where. Perhaps it suits the Chinese not to take on a venture in Malaya which they are not sure will be successful. Failure would explode the carefully nurtured Communist legend of invincibility, that history is on their side, a policy of inevitability that counts so much with many Asiatics of a fatalistic turn of mind. But also Mao-tse-tung, being an Asiatic, evidently knows what is meant by a bargain and the British Capitalists are probably expecting that their services over the matter of wrecking the American proposal of air help to the French in Indo-China, and their recognition of the present regime in China, will be remembered when the time comes in the East to hand out trade contracts.

China

It is reported by some of those who have made a study of the subject that China has given no help to the Viet-minh. Whatever the latter have had from China has had to be paid for. The record of Chinese dealings with so-called Communist Parties in other countries of Asia seems to support this view. But nevertheless China has, at the least, a strategic interest in the outcome of the struggle in Indo-China. This country has access to Chinese territory through a common frontier and the Indo-China railway system extends into China for 300 miles. It would seem to be to China's advantage to have a weak nationalist regime in Viet-nam rather than France and her powerful allies. China, the most experienced of all contestants, will probably make her weight felt to the greatest advantage.

The French

The French are the present holders of the title to exploit Indo-China, which title they have held since 1787. And what a prize they have! For this is a country of profitable mines and the lush countryside produces that valued contribution to Capitalist profits—cash crops—that is, rubber, tea, sugar, rice, coconuts, timber.

At Cam Pha in the north is the coalmine-owner's dream come true. Here is a seam of anthracite coal of fantastic size lying on the surface, 300 ft. wide, 370 ft. deep and over 20 miles long. All that the workers have to do is to shovel the coal into trucks. All the owners have to do is to take the profits. Ocean transport is available in that veritable fairyland of beauty-spots—the islet-studded Bay of Along.

Those who support French colonial policy in Indo-China could also point to the development that has taken place in Cochin China in the south. In the last 60 years 4,800,000 acres of new land have been reclaimed for agriculture. Swamps have been drained and canals dug; 7 billion cubic feet of land were dredged. Fields under rice cultivation have increased from 912,000 acres in 1868 to 5,760,000 acres to-day. In other provinces even greater increases of land under cultivation has been noted. In all some 12 million acres of tillable soil has been added to the land of Indo-China.

From 1885 to 1940 France invested a total of 5,200 piastres in the country.

Apart from its intrinsic worth, Indo-China has a strategic value arising from its position as a peninsular

athwart many of the trade routes to S.E. Asia.

Yet there are people who say that Indo-China is not worth fighting for!

The Workers enter the ring

But it is the *workers* who drain the swamps, grow the valuable crops and work the mines of Indo-China. It is also they who fight to protect French property which they have created by their own labour or to extend the rights of the rising Indo-China capitalists. But *they* are not represented at the Geneva Conference and *their* interests will not even be discussed. Whoever comes out on top in the struggle at Geneva the workers will still be the under-dogs. For them there will be no

prize. It will not alter their class position in this capitalist jungle if the French *are* elbowed out by a native ruling-class.

The Socialist movement alone has a working-class policy which would give a knock-out blow to all of the exploiters and throw the whole lot of them out of the ring for all time. Then will the fullness of the earth and the valuable cultures of all peoples be freely available for the whole of mankind. Socialists have a slogan which in its pithy way expresses our ideas—*Workers of the world unite. You have only your chains to lose you have a world to win.*

F. OFFORD.

THE EDWARDIANS

WE all sniggered, not long ago, over Uncle Fred's best suit in the family album; whatever could Aunt Alice have seen in him? Now, perhaps, we know, because what they wore before 1914 is a cult in 1954. Spiv clothes are out and Edwardians are in at the dance halls and on the monkey-parades—dull colours, baggy velvet-collared jackets, drainpipe trousers, straggly ties. Not quite the same as Uncle Fred, though: to-day's model stands on a crepe-soled plinth and is crowned with an elegant perm.

Something new in the world of fashion is often something old. In the last four or five years, reminiscent styles of one sort and another have recurred persistently, from spectacular waistcoats to the flat caps that were introduced to southern England by north-country football fans in the late nineteenth century. The full Edwardian rig first became news for the picture papers when popular dandies adopted it—a comedian, a politician and a film actor.

Then, in 1953, it jumped to the headlines: a fight among Edwardian-dressed adolescents on Clapham Common. One died of stab wounds and another was hanged for it. People became aware that the costume was no longer merely a sartorial idiosyncrasy. More drab and uneasy-looking as it passed into the too-cheap, too-smart gents' outfitters, it was multiplying as the dress of truculent youthful gangs. With increasing frequency it was mentioned in court cases of offensive rowdiness. In a few months its wearers were christened "Teddy Boys"; it had become, in fact, the hoodlums' uniform.

The same ideals and circumstances lead to the same attire often enough. You can usually tell the artists from the visitors at an exhibition; a shorthand-typist is not likely to be taken for a factory girl, nor a Conservative for an anarchist. The most famous example from recent years is the spiv, who established a cartoonists' golden age with his drape and his shoulder-padding and his fist-sized tie-knot. There is nothing unconventional or new in the assumption of a common, near-uniform dress by suburban larrikins. In the past, when an adolescent's income was shillings instead of pounds, the same tendency was exhibited from time to time but on a lesser scale; before 1939

there were "trilby-hat gangs" on the corners and round the coffee-stalls.

The public concern about the "Teddy Boys" is concern over the behaviour-patterns that are the grounds for their association. Ideals in uniforms have a more organised, impressive look about them; and by and large it is delinquency that wears the Edwardian uniform. Delinquency, not crime—and there is a considerable difference. A black marketeer or a street bookmaker is not a delinquent; on the other hand, a bunch of young men who make a street intolerable to passers-by may not be criminals but obviously are delinquents—that is, they have a consciously anti-social pattern of behaviour.

What causes delinquency? Everybody knows: the bishops, the leader-writers, the psychologists, the headmasters—they all know. Unhappy homes, insufficient religious teaching, low moral standards, American comics, amusement arcades—the whole modern "anatomie of abuses." And, as is often the case, the more remedies are proposed the worse the thing becomes. While the Edwardians flourish, the serious, train-their-character youth movements wane; the Boy Scouts, which in the 'twenties and 'thirties sent thousands of hairy-kneed sixteen-year-olds hiking through the countryside at summer week-ends, now is a little-boys' affair. The "Teddy Boys" have their own character and their own culture.

Mostly, they are youths between leaving school and being conscripted. That in itself is an obvious important factor: the sense of aimlessness, of having time to kill, must be tremendous. Here are you: kept at school up to fifteen, and at eighteen they want you again. In the meantime, for three years only is your life your own—except that whatever you propose, the State inexorably disposes at the end of the three years. And when you are in "the bleedin' Kate," there is generally one of two things; either fighting or twenty months of organised time-killing. The Edwardians lack purpose in life—and it isn't surprising.

There is, too, the desire for manliness, which is seen largely in terms of loudness, roughness and "seeking the bubble reputation." The desire is probably more potent to-day than at any previous time. One

reason is that a soldier, even an eighteen-year-old one, must be a man, and perhaps a stronger reason is that there is no longer any segregation or much reticence between the sexes. A girl of seventeen has achieved womanhood in appearance and, as often as not, in experience, too; her male counterpart, lacking her natural and circumstantial aids, can only make valiant efforts towards corresponding ends.

Several supposed causes of delinquency have already been mentioned. The most commonly cited—probably because it is the favourite with the clergy and at school prizegivings—is lack of religious teaching. Strangely enough, the Edwardians have had more of *that* than most people. The 1944 Education Act, gave religion a stronger footing in the schools than at any time since compulsory education began—and not every generation is subjected within a decade to pietistic profusions for a victory, a monarch's death and a coronation. It may be argued that religious teaching is only effective in the home; but no religion is more family-based, and more exacting, than Catholicism, and no cities have more crime and delinquency than those with large Catholic populations, like Liverpool and Glasgow.

Certainly no-one would deny that broken or unhappy homes contribute to delinquency; overcrowded homes, too. The absence of stability and affection can and does give rise to emotional conflicts, frustrations and resentments against society. Plenty of delinquents come from apparently good homes, however. There is a good deal of glib talk about adjustment and mal-adjustment, psychiatric terms that have passed into popular currency. Adjustment means a condition of harmony with the social environment; what of the person, then, who is adjusted to European civilisation in this present age? A. S. Neill, the high priest of "progressive" education, has written much about his achievements in adjusting recalcitrant or delinquent children from well-to-do homes. What is achieved? They are in harmony with predatoriness, violence,

suspicion and power; in harmony—with a diseased society.

Delinquency is a way in which people react to personal or group situations. More important still, the reaction is something learned from society. The whole behaviour-pattern of the "Teddy Boys"—the shiftlessness, the truculence, the irresponsibility—is their reaction to what society has given them and their display of what it has taught them. Behind them is the entire structure of western urban civilisation which, Frankenstein-like, creates its monsters and lives in fear of them.

There is no quick, easy answer to the problem. It is not enough to think of this or that, of broken homes or a sense of frustration, as the cause. You must ask why the family is disintegrating; why so many people in our world are frustrated and unhappy. Social misconduct is no more the result of deliberate personal choice than it is the product of heredity or constitution (and that myth, thank goodness, has long been exploded). Society, through the law and the majority of public opinion, assumes that the delinquent is merely malicious, and deals accordingly with him. "You want a damn good thrashing," five East London Edwardians were told last week before the magistrate fined them. And even where there is better understanding, the social circumstances to which delinquency is a reaction remain.

The driving force of our society is profit. All its institutions and ideals are shaped by that motive. So, in consequence, are its problems, and while the basis remains they will remain; or, if one apparent problem disappears it does so only to be replaced by another. A few years ago it was the spivs; now it is the Edwardians. The real answer to delinquency can only be found by establishing a social situation which will not set some in conflict and teach them lessons of power and fear. And that means, not punitive legislation, not religious teaching, but the abolition of profit-based society.

R. COSTER.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

The Fiftieth Anniversary Rally of the Party is being held on Sunday, 13th June, at St. Pancras Town Hall, Euston Road, London. Will members and friends make a note of the date and rally round and help to ensure a successful evening.

* * *

Ealing Branch took the opportunity during May to organise a special all-out drive to sell the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*. A rainy Sunday morning during the first week abruptly curtailed activities, but fine weather on the two following Sundays gave canvassers several hours of uninterrupted selling time. Sales by the middle of May, as we go to press, have already reached 21 dozen, and given fine weather for the remainder of the month the Branch is hopeful that the previous best monthly sale (32 dozen) will be exceeded.

A start is once more being made in selling the *S.S.* and pamphlets outside stations, and if first experiments

at Hammersmith Broadway are successful, this type of activity will be extended and put on a regular and organised basis.

Finally, we are hoping that a good outdoor propaganda season at Ealing Green and Heron Court, Richmond, will also play a part in stepping-up sales and make it our most successful literature season so far.

Our experience has shown that the results from canvassing vary in strictly arithmetical ratio with the number of canvassers taking part. In other words, given twice the number of canvassers, we could step up sales to 50-60 dozen without any difficulty. It is most rewarding and productive work, and it is not beyond the capacity of any member of the Branch (and the Party for that matter) to devote one Sunday morning a month to it. The results are there for everyone to see, and the field has hardly been touched.

An appeal is made to every Branch member to

contact the Literature Secretary, or any member of the Literature Committee, and find out how, when, and where he or she can help.

* * *

May Day Sunday in London was marred by rain and cold. Party members did their best under the circumstances to sell literature along the route of the Trades Unions' procession to Hyde Park. Our meeting in the Park was dampened by the rain.

However, a good indoor meeting was held in the evening at Conway Hall.

* * *

West Ham Branch members have renewed their canvassing drive and during April on one evening alone a hundred houses were called upon and twenty copies of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* were sold. The work has continued in May but figures of results are not yet available.

The Branch urges members to make every effort to assist in this work which is well worth while.

The canvassing party meets outside the "Boleyn" (corner of Green Street and Barking Road), East Ham, every Wednesday evening between 7.30 p.m. and 7.40 p.m.

Sunday evening outdoor meetings are held at this spot at 8 p.m. As the station is a new one, members should do all they can to support these meetings.

Friday evenings at 8 p.m. meetings are held at Station Road, Ilford.

Meanwhile Branch lectures will continue to be held on alternate Thursday evenings at Salisbury Road School, Manor Park Broadway. Details of meetings elsewhere in this issue.

A few tickets are available for the coach trip to Brighton which is being arranged by West Ham Branch. If members are interested please contact Branch Social Committee or telephone Ilford 2884. Date: Sunday, 27th June. A Propaganda Meeting will be held on the beach, in conjunction with Brighton Branch members.

P. H.

SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Detach and forward, with remittance, to Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Please send *SOCIALIST STANDARD* for 12 months (6 months, 2/9) for which 5/6 is enclosed.

Name
(BLOCK LETTERS)

Address

.....
(State if renewal or new subscriber.)

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN JUNE

Wednesday: Gloucester Road Stn., Kensington, 8 p.m.

Thursday: Notting Hill Gate, 8 p.m.

Friday: Earls Court 8 p.m. (sharp).

Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.

Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.

Hyde Park, 6 p.m.

Sundays: White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11.30 a.m.

Finsbury Park, 12 noon.

East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.

Hyde Park, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

Katherine Street, Croydon, 8 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.

Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
Exmouth Market.

Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.

Thursdays: Tower Hill.

Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

CROYDON BRANCH LECTURES

The following lectures will be given at Ruskin House, Wellesley Road, Croydon (near W. Croydon Station), at 8 p.m.:—

Wednesday, 2nd June: "Marxism and Economic Determinism"—E. Wilmott.

Wednesday, 16th June: "The Socialist Attitude"—J. McGregor.

Wednesday, 30th June: (To be announced).
R. Bott.

PUBLIC MEETING

"THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION"

Speaker: E. Wilmott.

Wednesday, 16th June, 8 p.m. Islington Central Library, 68, Holloway Road, N.7.

PADDINGTON BRANCH

50th ANNIVERSARY SOCIAL AND DANCE

Euston Tavern, 73, Euston Road, N.W.1 (opposite St. Pancras Station), Saturday, 12th June, 1954, 7 to 11.30 p.m.

WEST HAM BRANCH LECTURES

At Salisbury Road School, Manor Park Broadway.

Thursday, 10th June, at 8 p.m.: "Materialist Conception of History"—E. Wilmott.

Thursday, 24th June, at 8 p.m.: Title to be announced
—J. Lestor.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

DUNDEE GROUP.—Meets Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at Woodworker's Hall, Coupars Alley, Wellgate. Correspondence to P. G. Cavanagh, 1b, Benrie Road, Dundee.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 18, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 2nd, 16th and 30th June, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

ROMFORD.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.). Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 57, Fareham Avenue, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets alternate Thursdays 3rd and 17th June at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd. (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmers Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Grisley, 47, Eastbourne Grove, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month 7.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visit is welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vineyard Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to D. Deutz, 21, Kenilworth Gardens, Seven Kings, Essex.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. 1st and 3rd Thursdays (3rd and 17th June) Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. C. Langston, 99, Rommany Road, West Norwood, S.E.27.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lee.

Fulham meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6 Koppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, June 14th and 28th, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Farmer, 46, Fernie Street, Glasgow, N.W.

Hackney meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197 Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Ivemey 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Illington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. C. Rowan, 28, Rodbourne Avenue, Finchley, N.3.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec., 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rumsey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 1st, 15th and 29th June George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 599 Vol. 50 July, 1954

Holidays with Pay

NO FREEDOM OF THE AIR
FOR S.P.G.B.

A POET OF THE PEOPLE

THE HITLER FILM

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY

IT IS INDISPUTABLE that, since the war, an increasing number of people have annual holidays, but before we applaud this happy fact, let us examine the reasons. Twenty-five years ago few people enjoyed a regular break from their employment, except, of course, the idleness enforced by unemployment. To-day, however, an annual fortnight's holiday is an accepted feature of their job. This is mainly due to recognition by the capitalist class that a refreshed working class makes for greater efficiency and higher productivity (e.g., contented cows yield more milk) and also organised working-class activity (i.e., shortage of labour-power giving the workers stronger bargaining powers).

Accompanying the development of capitalism we find machine production ever more complex, a higher division of labour and hence a growth of monotonous repetitive operations. The effect on employees of these factors is boredom, nervous strain and physical disorders, making a break from this drab existence imperative. Having tightened nuts, hammered rivets, checked invoices, and swept floors innumerable times, fifty weeks a year, the remaining two weeks must be spent forgetting nuts, rivets, invoices and floors. The working class, generally speaking, regard a holiday as a period in which to flee from the rut of normal existence. In other words, not to do those things one usually has to do, to do all those things one cannot normally do, and where either of these cannot be carried out, then to do them under more congenial surroundings and conditions.

Therefore, the manner in which various individuals spend their restricted release is determined largely by their particular job of work. Of course, the style of the holiday is conditioned by the financial resources, indeed, whether they have a holiday at all is dependent upon that factor.

Most workers will make as little physical exertion as possible, they will lie in bed until fully rested, a thing which is usually denied them. Frequent bouts of ice-cream, beer, sweets, fish and chips, and stomach powder are only too common. In fact, food and drink assume undue prominence as being luxuries which can only be fully indulged in after a year's self denial, after periods of overtime, and with the possible addition of a wife's wages. The worker will spend his limited cash on all manner of cheap, tawdry and very often useless things, his rate of spending being the measure of his enjoyment. He will saunter around amusement arcades to fire guns, shy at coconuts, visit haunted houses and ride in "dodg'ems" in an effort to exhilarate his normally uneventful existence.

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Speculative members of the ruling class have not been slow in recognising the demand for this style of holiday. Hence the growth of holiday-camps, where instead of seeking these various amusements they are all laid out before you, to such an extent that you almost trip over them. Everything is organised, including the children, who are whisked away to allow the erstwhile harassed parents temporary relief from their offsprings' eternal cravings. The holidaymakers are even spared the tiresome process of thinking, and should they be caught in a contemplative mood a camp "scout" will quickly guide their thoughts into less serious veins.

For some members of the working-class, mainly the younger ones, whose jobs are of less manual character, holidays are spent in a more rigorous fashion. They discover for themselves the towns, villages and countryside by cycling, hiking, canoeing and mountaineering. For them the yardstick of their enjoyment is not the amount of money they have spent, but what they have seen and achieved.

Another section of the working-class go hop-picking and harvesting. This euphemistically termed holiday contains the same old facts behind a different facade, instead of the factory and foreman—the field and farmer.

Having summarised typical working-class holidays (where they can be afforded) let us now examine the vacations of the capitalist-class.

As the workers' concept of holidays arises from his employment and environment in everyday life, the capitalists' concept (since he is not employed, etc.) must be different. The dictionary defines a holiday as a period of leisure, in which one does what one likes when one likes, how one likes, but the life of the capitalist is almost continually within this definition. Since this life leaves little to be desired, a holiday for the capitalist usually means a change of location with attendant ostentation. Not for them the necessity of booking accommodation months in advance, nor the hazards of an English climate and certainly money presents no problems. He may indulge in his most capricious whims, be it winter sports or water spas, Palm Beach or Paris. This is the class that can scoff at the restricted foreign travel allowance. The playgrounds of the British Commonwealth (Bermuda, etc.) using pound sterling are open to him and other

"sterling" ports are convenient places for him to revictual his yacht. On the other hand, in non-sterling areas he can stay with friends at their expense, which he reciprocates when they in turn holiday in Britain. Again, he may fancy a lengthy sea cruise, where, on a sun deck he may recline comfortably, attended by stewards, and gaze upon enchanting tropical islands beneath azure skies. For the more sober-minded captain of industry, he may simply motor about his homeland and tolerate the services offered by the first-class English hotels, but this of course lends little colour to his conversations when he returns to his club. For the more flamboyant, if the mood takes him, he may sit at the gaming tables of Monte Carlo with the gay abandon that wealth affords him. However, if wine, women and song is desired there is always the fashionable club of Paris, or better still an invitation to a swank soiree on the "right" side of the Seine. With the latter there is always the thrilling possibility of being mentioned in the gossip columns of sophisticated society magazines, advertising the elite company that one keeps.

But why should a small section of society enjoy not only the very best of holidays, but almost all material things? What special power does this minority possess that enables them to enjoy this privileged position? Their powers rest not upon their mental or physical superiority but upon their ownership of the means of wealth production.

Under the present-day system of society, where the tools of production are privately owned, a large majority, through their lack of ownership of these tools, are economically forced to seek employment. That means that these people are exploited and as such, never receive the full fruits of their labour. This causes much discontent and gives rise to a common feeling that work is nauseating and a "necessary evil" and therefore this sharp division between employment and play. To a Socialist, this is just another ugly feature of capitalism, which will remain till the machinery of wealth production is converted to common ownership. Then man will be released from his wage slavery, and work will become regarded in its correct perspective, that is, there will be joy in creation. Society will be producing wealth for use and not for sale and profit as it is to-day.

DE NORM.

CRY OVER SPILT MILK

"Villagers blinked in surprise when a 3,000-gallon milk tanker drew up at their disused coal mine. They wondered why. But they were not left wondering long—for the milk was poured to the bottom of the pit."

"The tanker came again and again and the people of Tunley, near Bath, found that their pit had been turned into a 60,000-gallon 'milk bottle'."—*Daily Herald*, (2.6.54.)

The milk was skimmed and had been left over from butter-making. "Transport and other difficulties" allegedly prevented the farmers having it for animal fattening, yet the tankers could make 20-mile trips just to dump it. The Milk Marketing Board offered the explanation that when sold at 3½d. or 4d.

a pint was hardly economical. Milk, of course, is today produced to sell, and if it can't be sold then the cows are just wasting their time.

Ironically enough, on the same day the *Manchester Guardian* carried a report that a record number of one million cows were artificially inseminated in the year ended last March. These dumb animals had better realise that, along with their human counterparts, they are in grave danger of working themselves out of a job. Not only that—their work seems to have been deprived of pleasure, too.

STAN.



A POET OF THE PEOPLE

How many people know that there really was a poem—and a mighty serious one, too—about Christmas Day in the workhouse? Its author was George R. Sims. In the year when a king had the first appendix operation, when Phil May cashed his sketches for a fiver a time and Bernard Shaw was a St. Pancras Borough Councillor, he was the most popular Sunday journalist in England.

Sims had a page to himself every week in the *Referee*. Each of the *Referee's* contributors carried the name of a knight of the Round Table: the editor was "Pendragon," and Sims was "Dagonet"—the name of King Arthur's jester. His page was called "Mustard and Cress"; his touch was sure and his influence tremendous.

Playwright, critic, gossip-writer, novelist, poet, business man and reformer—Sims was all of these. His life in the public eye began in 1874, when he was twenty-seven. He joined the *Referee* at its inception in 1877; he wrote to the *Daily News* about the housing of the London poor, and made a sensation with "How the Poor Live." He could—and did popularize places, commodities and slogans. The first popular hair restorer, "Tatcho" (the word was Romany for "genuine"), owed its fame to him.

By 1900, Sim's name was a byword. He employed two secretaries and lived in a luxurious house facing Regents Park—his readers knew it as "Opposite-the-Ducks." The house had an "Arabian Nights" salon, a magnificent library where he wrote "Living London," and a "comic-opera" room where famous performers entertained Sims and his friends. He had a bulldog named Barney Barnato and a house-keeper whose malapropisms were—rather unkindly, one feels—recorded in "Mustard and Cress."

The "Dagonet Ballads" first appeared in the *Referee*, and were quickly reprinted in book form. Sims was not a great poet, nor even a good one. He wrote with the unctuous matiness that is called "the common touch"—a sure winner, as Wilfred Pickles' fans will tell you. Just as all rich people were black-hearted to some of the old radicals, all poor people were altruistic and good in the eyes of Sims, the poet. He sentimentalized uninhibitedly over them—women and children first, of course; and what gave the Dagonet ballads their tremendous popularity was that Sims really meant it all.

He had a genuine and deep sympathy for the poor. His stubby, aggressive figure was well-known in Deptford and the Borough. When his successful play "The Lights o' London" was shown, a crowd of real costermongers and barrow boys brought the street scenes to life. He was on terms of friendship with them; their children were taken for wonderful outings by Sims and his wife. And his verse, with all its clichés and gaucheries and its horrible sentimentality,

was illuminated by flashes of real understanding of what it meant to be poor.

"In the Workhouse" was Sims's masterpiece. It is melodramatic and tear-jerking, but through it there runs a vein of knowing, trenchant irony:

"It is Christmas Day in the Workhouse
And the cold bare walls are bright
With garlands of green and holly,
And the place is a pleasant sight:
For with clean-washed hands and faces
In a long and hungry line
The paupers sit at the tables
For this is the hour they dine.
And the guardians and their ladies,
Although the wind is east,
Have come in their furs and wrappers
To watch their charges feast:

To smile and be condescending,
Put pudding on pauper plates,
To be hosts at the workhouse banquet
They've paid for—with the rates."

And the incredulous indignation when a militant pauper "declines the vulture's feast":

"The guardians gazed in horror.
The master's face went white:
Did a pauper refuse their pudding?
Could their ears believe aright?
Then the ladies clutched their husbands,
Thinking the man would die,
Struck by a bolt, or something,
From the outraged One on high."

So shrewdly is charity characterized, in all its proverbial coldness, that one would assume Sims to have known too much to indulge in it himself. One would be wrong. He was the mainspring of his paper's "Poor Children's Winter Dinner Fund"; he, too,

"Put pudding on pauper plates."

At the height of his popularity—all his life, in fact—Sims campaigned vigorously for reforms which would improve the living conditions of the poor. He was never poor himself; he came from a comfortable home and finished his schooling on the continent. Because of his influence he was offered several Parliamentary candidatures, but never accepted.

Many of the problems with which Sims was concerned are not so apparent nowadays. Less is heard about the workhouse, because it is called by another name and not so many people go to it (they draw out-

door relief instead). The exploitation of young children in industry has practically ceased. Drunkenness and street fights are no longer familiar parts of the social scene. And it is easy to overlook that fifty or sixty years ago some courage was required to agitate for the world to be changed even a little. While Sims was pressing for better sanitation and housing, a noble earl was pronouncing: "... Experience has unfortunately shown that with no class is sanitary reform so unpopular as with the wage class." Another contributor to *The Nineteenth Century* observed: "Had people taken the trouble to learn what kind of persons they were going to better, it is possible that some of our largest institutions would not have been started, and certainly no one would have been surprised at the number of failures that sadden the heart of a conscientious committee." A Socialist was a ruffian in a red tie to most people then.

One of Sims's favourite themes was the upper-class marriage market. With the same hand that painted a heart-rending picture of the working-class "fallen woman," he pointed accusingly at the society betrothal. Plenty has been written on that subject, but nothing more forthright than Dagonet's "Two Women":

"She is crowned with the world's fresh roses,
no tongue has a word of blame;
But the woman who falls from hunger is a thing
too foul to name.
She is blessed who barter her honour just for
a prince's smile;
The vice of the Court is *charming*, and the vice
of the alley *vile*.
So, world, shall it be for ever—this hunting
the street girl down.
While you honour the titled Phryne, and hold her
in great renown;
But when, at the great uprising, they meet for
the Judgement Day.
I'd rather be that drowned harlot than the
beautiful Countess May."

Sims never wanted to lead working people, nor to teach them; he wanted and tried to make things better for them. He "meant well," to use a well-thumbed phrase; he "did a lot of good," to use another. Many good things have been done for the working class by reformers—and how little has the life of the working

class changed, in spite of it all. Housing has improved, and is still bad; in the industrial areas people still live in brick hutches that were flung up over a century ago. Working hours are shorter, factory conditions are better, and there are a thousand and one new strains and anxieties. More material comforts and better amenities are everywhere, and there are more frustrated and unsatisfied people than ever before.

It is a pity that most reformers never realise the implications of their good intentions. The person who does something for the poor—children's dinners, free boots and so on—has accepted that they shall go on being poor, and is merely trying to make it a little more tolerable to them. In all Sims's righteous indignation there is no suggestion that he thought the poor could be abolished altogether, and it probably never occurred to him. His solution was benevolence, just as it was Dickens's; if all the employers and the guardians and the landlords were transformed like Scrooge into jolly, open-handed philanthropists, the world would be a fine place.

It is not people who are reformed, however (unless one believes the Salvation Army); it is the social system. Each reform is a patch on the system's fabric—and not, as some people suppose, a nail in its coffin. That is why the thousands of large and small reforms cannot really change things very much—they leave the system unimpaired and even refurbished a little. Benevolence is one thing, the abolition of poverty another. The best of social reforms does not, and cannot, overturn the factor that gives some people low wages and others high profits, any more than it is able to control or predict economic crises.

Real improvement in living means creating the right conditions—and before that, doing away with the wrong ones. The Socialist's unvarying answer to Reformers sounds unpalatable and even hard-hearted, but it is true. Either capitalism is abolished or it remains; and while it remains, the perennial difficulties of working-class life will be there too.

Let us, then, raise our hats a little to Dagonet; he tried to know the lives of the people and to be their poet. And let us replace them with a sigh, for him and for all the other good-natured, good-meaning people who have thought, and think still, that pails can drain a river.

R. COSTER.

LEADERS AND LED

IN capitalist society the workers may find themselves short of many things but they are never short of "leaders." The business of becoming a leader is an art which is followed by many for reasons which range from a mistaken sense of service and guidance to those who desire power solely and consciously in their own interest. Whichever the category to which the prospective leader belongs, his actions have the same result as far as the working class is concerned. The quest for places in professional leadership circles is a cunning and often ruthless task, the accent being on the cunning and ruthless method in countries openly dictatorial in form, while in the more democratic countries the method is more varied and subtle but none the less successful. In any case, we get our leaders

either born great, having achieved greatness, or having greatness thrust upon them.

Our educational system is a vital part of the machinery for maintaining the idea of the desirability of leadership. The recent conference of the National Association of Head Teachers was treated to an address by its president, Miss Armstrong, in which she waxed eloquent on the leadership idea. She states that leaders are chosen for their "ability to lead" and she extolls democracy as being a situation that opens a way for the "humblest born to attain high prominence in the State as leaders." We cannot but deplore and condemn such a view on democracy.

Miss Armstrong believes that one of the duties of teachers is to produce leaders though she does qualify

this by saying that some teachers may disagree with this view. She, however, is full of hope that "brilliant children in Grammar Schools should be educated for leadership."

In conformity with her leadership views she clinches her argument with reference to the teaching of religion in schools and its importance in bringing about the kind of society she wants to see (obviously, the leaders and the led). In this context she does not mention those teachers who disagree.

While on the subject of leadership in the religious sense, one finds that it has gone to extraordinary lengths in that home of strange causes, the U.S.A. where, we are told, the 1936 Convention of the followers of a Mr. George Baker, alias "Father Divine," established by unanimous vote, that he (George Baker) was God Incarnate. Since 1936 this particular God enterprise has gone on from strength to strength and is now a full scale profit making enterprise. Perhaps "Father Divine" had the good fortune to have been educated by one of Miss Armstrong's "teachers of faith and sound conviction"?

Finally, to come to a more "earthly" kind of conference—that of the British Legion, held recently, where once more the question of pensions arose.

Disabled ex-servicemen know more about leaders and leadership than most; they have their medals and their disablement to prove it. Sir Ian Fraser, Tory leader of the disabled, as usual raises his voice on their

behalf, supported by other "lesser leaders" of Churches, T.U. branches, Co-ops, etc.

Examples, given in the press, of the budgets of some of our disabled, are indeed heart rending. It is more so to the Socialist who finds the aim of the "great attack" against a niggardly government is to increase the present miserable amount of pension to something only a little less miserable. Our view, of course, is that workers, fit and unfit, would be better employed in struggling for a world where everyone—barring accident and natural causes—will be able to keep his health and limbs intact during his natural span of life.

To sum up: Socialists have no use for leaders; leaders imply the led. Socialists are people capable of doing their own thinking. Thinking people will not require leaders rather than administrators. Just as at the moment sons and daughters of the workers are bought and employed as administrators for Capitalist enterprises both State and privately run. This is the meaning of the Head Teachers' leader's plea for education in leadership—to perpetuate the prevailing system. Socialists want to change the prevailing system.

The chief reason for people supporting the continuation of Capital, even whilst grumbling at its deficiencies (as the Disabled Men's Organizations are doing) is because *they are led to believe* that there is no alternative. Socialists know otherwise and want others to know too.

W. BRAIN.



THE HITLER FILM

The full title of the motion picture is *The Eva Braun and Hitler Story*. It is made up of actual photographs of people and events, and a large number of shots were taken in Hitler's own domestic circle.

Why this picture was not brought out years ago is a trifle puzzling since all the filming took place up to 1945. Perhaps the answer is to be found in the warning tagged on the end of the title on the screen, "it must never happen again."

One thing that stood out from start to finish of the film was that it was meant to spotlight the military aspects of Hitler Germany and to say as little as possible about working class conditions there. In the light of up-to-date events in Germany, the propaganda of the period of the picture shows the complete hypocrisy of capitalist propaganda. During the showing, when one had just got used to seeing German military uniforms, the scene suddenly switched to a conference of "Allied" war men, amongst them Eisenhower and

Montgomery, and for a moment apart from knowing the faces, one could see no difference.

The scenes when Hitler drove through the streets lined on both sides with cheering, flag-waving workers, were quite similar to those witnessed when members of the Royal family and political leaders do the same thing here and elsewhere throughout the world. The spirit of nationalism and patriotism is built and fostered in all cases.

A lot was made of the privilege and comfort enjoyed by Eva Braun and the children, whilst other Germans faced privation and hardship, particularly after D-day and the air-raids on German cities. We are presumably supposed to think that the allied rulers were different in this respect.

The film tries to convince us that it was merely the dreams of Hitler and his "love of power" that drove Germany to war, as if the need to expand and find markets and resources in a capitalist world had had nothing to do with it. Under capitalism each nation grabs what it can in territories, resources, markets and trade-routes and although these things are the concern of the capitalist class they are a ways prepared to "grab" or "defend" them with working-class lives. After Germany's defeat in the 1914-18 blood bath for profits, the pickings of Europe were taken. The idea of keeping Germany out of the game lasted until French capitalism showed signs of having ambitions of its own. Then the "balance of power" policy was reverted to. When Hitler came along he adapted himself to the prevailing conditions by promising work to the unemployed and revival to the thwarted industrialists. The war-machine and the State dictatorship were to be the means to expand. The fact that from the earliest days Hitler's Germany was building warships and going ahead with rearmament far in excess of what was permitted under the treaties, was very well known. The slogan "expand or bust," applies to all capitalist nations. That is why there are always new rivals, new line-ups, and new wars being planned.

To expand is to develop industry and production, which means the creation of vast surpluses of goods for which markets *must be found*—or bust, which means slump, crisis and depression. Since the markets and resources of Europe were already being exploited, to "expand" for Germany meant arming and marching. The film under review was really nothing more than a record of the process whereby Germany shook off the restraints of defeat and reasserted herself as an industrial power. Who was it that said "history repeats itself?"

The commentator, during a conference between Hitler and Mussolini, referred to them as these "Fascist" leaders, but no comment was made on Churchill's one-time admiration for these figures (particularly Mussolini) in pre-war days.

Our case as Socialists is that capitalism is rotten and ugly wherever it may be, in that it rests on the exploitation of the many by the few and all the pacts

and alliances are nothing but manoeuvres for position amongst the thieves. We said in 1936: "No frontier is worth the life of a single worker" (P. 4 "War and the Working Class"). Years before this at the outbreak of the 1914-18 war we made similar statements, and to-day we say exactly the same.

In spite of the denunciations of one Power by another, opposing groups are prepared to line up together if it suits their purpose. Did not the British and American capitalists, while affecting to despise one dictatorship, line up with another—Russia? We know it is claimed that this was only done to "smash Fascism," but now the ex-allies are planning to smash one-another with half the ex-Fascists on each side. Surely the complete farce of capitalism is self-evident.

No film of Hitler Germany would be complete without some reference being made to the persecution of the Jews. Let it be recognised, however, that racial discrimination is not something of which Germany alone was guilty. Though, of course, not to be compared with the mass brutalities perpetrated in Germany in the name of race, race prejudice exists everywhere. Even at the time of writing certain states in the U.S.A., for example, are talking of forcibly resisting the High Courts order to end segregation in American schools.

The conclusion we come to is that if any propaganda film tells the truth in full it will expose the foul deeds of its own side as well as those of its opponents. Truth then can never be the stock-in-trade of capitalist propagandists; the stories are always told with the slant of whatever national capitalist group puts them over.

As Socialists we do not merely find fault with this or that capitalist country. We say that where there is capitalism, i.e. class ownership of the means of living, buying and selling, wage-labour and profits, there is poverty, misery and drudgery, and in no country do the working class own anything to die for. The fight of the world's workers is the fight to get the capitalist class off their backs by introducing Socialism—i.e., a world system with no wages, profits, buying or selling, where all the means of living are held in common and war and war propaganda are things of the past.

H. B.

ABOUT BOOKS

B RITISH Trade Unions can be divided, briefly into three categories: unions that cater for workers in one trade only, like the United Society of Boilermakers; unions that embrace all the workers in an industry, like the National Union of Mineworkers and the National Union of Railwaymen; and unions that enrol members from a wide variety of trades, jobs and industries, such as the Transport and General Workers' Union and the National Union of General and Municipal Workers.

The tendency during the past few decades has been for federations and amalgamations to thin out the ranks of the smaller craft unions and to create, by a merging process, the large organisations that we know today.

This process has created problems of organisation. Unions with hundreds of thousands of members,

many of them engaged in different trades and spread all over the country, have had to devise some complicated machinery for the management of their affairs, the formulating and carrying out of national policies. Most of them have constitutions that provide for control of policy by the membership, but in practice, this democratic control does not work out. The majority of trade unionists take no part in the formulation of their union's policy. Of those that are active the larger number have little, if any, understanding of the society in which their organisation functions and, in consequence, have their ideas moulded by their trade union officials. Thus, the officials are able to impose a policy on the unions.

A book entitled *Power in Trade Unions, A Study of their Organisation in Great Britain*, by V. L. Allen, has recently been published by Longmans, Green and

Co., at 25/-. Mr. Allen examines the constitutions of 127 unions and shows the policy-making process, the power of trade union executives and permanent officers and the disciplinary measures used to ensure obedience from the members.

A similar work was published in 1952 by George Allen and Unwin, entitled *The Government of British Trade Unions*, by Joseph Goldstein. Mr. Goldstein limited his study almost exclusively to the Transport and General Workers' Union and revealed how apathy destroys the application of democratic principles.

Both these authors have collected masses of figures and have compiled many charts to illustrate their revelations. For the student of Trade Unionism both books are worth reading, but if one had to be selected we would recommend Mr. Allen's.

The History of Trade Unionism, by Sydney and Beatrice Webb, although it does not bring the picture right up to date, is still the classic history of the subject. A useful little book that brings the subject right up to 1952, is *British Trade Unionism, a Short History*,

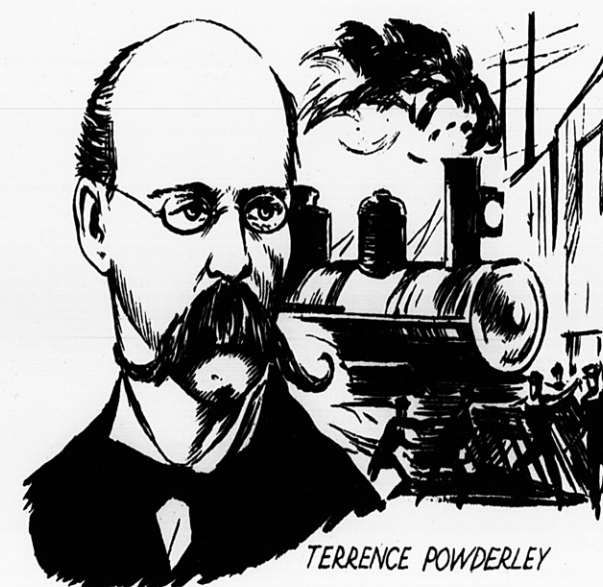
by Allen Hutt, published by Lawrence and Wishart, for 12/6. Mr. Hutt's political sentiments peep through in places, but his book is a good, interesting, short history.

A less useful, though very interesting book, is an illustrated volume in the *Britain in Pictures* series, published by William Collins. It is *British Trade Unions*, by Sir Walter Citrine.

Two books, useful to students, covering a wide study of Trade Unions in a limited number of pages are *Trade Unions Today*, by Henry Collins (Frederick Muller Ltd., 6/-), and *British Trade Unions*, by N. Barou. (Gollancz. Left Book Club).

This small collection of books should give a student a satisfactory grounding in the subject and should make him realise the limitations of trade union action in improving the lot of the working class. Capitalism sets the limits and the trade unions, products of that system cannot break outside it. Only by social revolution can the working class escape from the ills which they seek to palliate through trade union action.

W. WATERS.



Backwaters of History (9)

THE KNIGHTS OF LABOUR

A MERICA in 1869. Abraham Lincoln had been dead four years and Andrew Johnson was president, to be ousted in that year by the famous General Ulysses Simpson Grant. Brigham Young, who had proclaimed the doctrine of polygamy in 1852, was prophet and president of the Mormon state of Utah, to which he had led his persecuted followers five years earlier. In San Francisco the infamous Barbary Coast was at the height of its notoriety. Indian wars were being fought in Colorado. There was gold in Nevada. The westward flowing traffic on the Oregon trail was passing to the newly built Union Pacific Railway. Gun-slingers were rampant in Kansas. In the southern states, recently devastated by the civil war, the negroes, released from their chattel slavery, were being coerced into a form of serfdom through the medium of "protective legislation" and vagrancy laws. "Carpet-baggers" from the north and "Scurrywags" from the south, were muscling-in on the war-torn states and creating the rackets that furnished the foundations for more than a few American family fortunes. In the northern states industry was flourishing. The European agents of American manufacturers were gathering together hun-

dreds of thousands of willing worker emigrants, making contracts with them and herding them across the Atlantic to satisfy the hungry maw of the American labour market for cheap labour power.

Philadelphia—"city of brotherly love"—founded by William Penn, the Quaker, in 1682 as a city in which men of all races might live, each following, unpersecuted, his own religion. Philadelphia, with its growing industries, received its share of immigrants. Amongst them were many Germans, some of whom were political exiles and refugees and had experience with the International Working Men's Association.

The condition of the American workers in 1869 was vile. Tens of thousands of women and children were working eleven and twelve hours a day. Overcrowded, ill ventilated, damp, insalubrious tenements and dwelling houses were a prolific cause of disease. Wages were kept low and strikes were smashed by the importation of more and more cheap labourers from Europe and Asia. Workers were imported from China for \$100 each and paid wages of from \$8 to \$12 a month.

Continued on page 105

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JULY,



1954

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

NO FREEDOM OF THE AIR
FOR S.P.G.B.

IN the current argument between the Labour and Tory parties about the respective merits of commercial and non-commercial television both sides have something to say about the extent to which the one or other method will give a stranglehold to monopoly and crowd out small groups. The Labourites, in line with their general support for government control maintain that commercial T.V. would give a monopoly to large and wealthy commercial interests; to which their opponents retort that State monopoly has even less regard for weak independent views. The S.P.G.B., not being enamoured in the least of either private or State capitalism, can see no merit in either point of view. It is true that with commercial T.V. (or sound broadcasting) the capitalist rule prevails that the freedom of the air is for those who can afford to pay for it, but it is also true that in all the 32 years of State controlled broadcasting in this country the S.P.G.B. case has never once been allowed to be heard.

This is not for want of trying. On numerous occasions application has been made but always some reason is found for refusing it. The latest application, made in August, 1953, has ended in the usual way. Not, of course, a blunt declaration that there is no intention to allow us to broadcast, merely polite refusals extend over decades they add up to the same thing as a final no.

The first reason for refusal is that Party political

broadcasts are reserved for parties represented in Parliament or putting forward a certain number of candidates at a general election. When we pointed out that this arrangement rests on an agreement of the large political parties and in effect gives them a monopoly to the exclusion of small organizations the B.B.C. replied saying that they resented this imputation. The exclusion of the small organizations from that series of political broadcasts did not, said the B.B.C. give a monopoly to the big organizations because there are other political broadcasts outside that series.

Fine, so we applied to come under one of them, as we have done before, and in order to fit in with the suggestion thrown out by the B.B.C. we related our proposed broadcast to the 50th anniversary of the founding of the S.P.G.B. To this we received the reply that our proposed statement does not offer a basis for a broadcast because there would not, in the opinion of the B.B.C. be sufficient public interest in the anniversary of the S.P.G.B.

So this latest attempt to get on the air meets the fate of the several earlier applications—a number of different ways of saying no.

We would add, for the information of Labour Party supporters who may think that things are different under Labour Government, that we received the same treatment under Labour Government as under the present and pre-war Conservative Governments.

In the recent correspondence we reminded the B.B.C. that in 1949 the Broadcasting Committee under the chairmanship of Lord Beveridge, had recommended the B.B.C. to consider the possibility of a kind of "Hyde Park of the Air," in order to give all minorities which had a message, "religious or otherwise," some time to broadcast. (Report. Para. 257). They also expressed the view (Para 259) that the allocation of opportunities to ventilate controversial views "should not be guided either by simple calculations of the numbers who already hold such views or by fear of giving offence to particular groups of listeners."

Those recommendations evidently fell on deaf ears at Broadcasting House.

SEPTEMBER
SPECIAL NUMBER

We would again remind members and sympathisers that we urgently require donations to cover the extra cost of the September Special Number of the "Socialist Standard." Unless sufficient money comes in quickly we will have to be more modest in our proposals. We urge those who are interested in seeing this Special Number a worthy commemoration of fifty years of our paper to do their best to see that we can accomplish this object. So far the response has not been what it should be and the time is getting short.

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY—continued from page 103

"A shoe manufacturer in North Adams, Massachusetts imported 75 Chinese to displace striking members of the Knights of St. Crispin in 1870"—(*The Workers in American History*, James Oneal, p. 175.)

It required courage to stand up to the persecution and the outlawing black-list that threatened every worker who attempted to organise with his fellows, yet, despite these conditions, there arose some powerful working class organisations.

Amongst the garment workers of Philadelphia were some courageous men, including some of the German exiles. They were organised by Uriah S. Stephens into a secret society the name of which was not written but indicated by five stars whenever it was necessary to refer to it in print or writing. For nine years it preserved its secrecy with its passwords, handgrips and queer cabalistic signs chalked on the sidewalks and fences. Its ritual declared that,

"... open and public association having failed after a struggle of centuries to protect or advance the interests of labour, we have lawfully constituted this assembly and in using this power of organised effort and co-operation we but imitate the example of capital, for in all the multifarious branches of trade, capital has its combinations and whether intended or not it crushes the manly hopes of labour and tramples poor humanity into the dust."—(Quoted by Mary Beard in *A Short History of the American Labour Movement*, pp. 116-117.)

In 1878 this society came into the open as The Noble Order of the Knights of Labour, called its first general assembly and elected its founder as Grand Master Workman. Stephens resigned shortly afterwards and was succeeded by Terrence V. Powderley.

The Knights of Labour proclaimed a concern for all workers regardless of skill, sex or race. It took as its slogan, "An injury to one is the concern of all." It refused to countenance craft exclusiveness, claiming that the solidarity of the workers could bridge all differences and secure "the physical well-being, the mental development and the moral elevation of mankind." Anyone who worked for wages could become a member. Only saloon keepers, lawyers, doctors and bankers were prohibited from joining.

The organisation spread all over the United States. It was organised into locals of two kinds; trade locals comprising members of one trade only, and mixed locals with membership available to all. Delegates from five locals constituted a district assembly and delegates from the districts formed the general assembly which had over-riding authority.

The aims of the K. of L. were not revolutionary and it did not recognise the class struggle. Amongst its aims were these:—

"... no conflict with legitimate enterprise, no antagonism to necessary capital. . . ."

"We shall with all our strength support laws made to harmonise the interests of labour and capital and also those laws which tend to lighten the exhaustiveness of toil."—(Quoted by A. Bimba in *The History of the American Working Class*, pp. 173-174.)

The Knights did not start out to encourage strikes and the leaders frequently tried to suppress them. They aimed to replace a competitive society by a co-operative one which would give the workers the opportunity to enjoy fully the wealth they created. This was to be done by reducing the "money power" of the banks. They also aimed to secure the eight hour day, equal pay for equal work by women, abolition of child

and convict labour, public ownership of mines, railways and other utilities and the establishment of co-operatives.

The religious fervour with which the campaign for the eight hour day was conducted drew thousands of workers to the ranks of K. of L. Despite its original aims it was forced to participate in strikes and it entered into wage agreements with employers. Its locals organised stay-in strikes amongst miners, boycotts and sent funds to strikers.

On February 26th, 1886, the shopmen on the Wabash Railroad suffered a 10 per cent. cut in pay. The following day they were out on strike and were joined on March 9th by the shopmen of the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railway, who had received a wage cut the previous October. Shortly there were 4,500 workers on strike. The Knights sent their Union Pacific Railroad man, Buckman, with \$30,000 to lead and finance the strike and locomotives were immobilised by the removal of vital parts. The railway companies gave in but later that year they tried to break the power of the K. of L. by dismissing them from their employ. They were immediately faced with a threat of strike action by 20,000 workers, and Jay Gould, the owner of the south west railway system, surrendered.

Successes like this caused workers to flock to the K. of L. and its membership increased seven-fold in one year reaching the peak of 700,000, almost 10 per cent. of the industrial wage workers.

Later strike efforts were sabotaged by the Knight's leaders on the plea that prolonged strikes caused suffering to the workers and their families. Strikes were even called off when they had been waged to the point of success. There was an instance in Chicago. In October, 1886, 20,000 butchers were locked out by the owners of the meat packing industry in an effort to re-establish the ten hour working day, the workers having achieved an eight hour day some time previously. Two regiments of militia were sent by the State governor to force the workers into submission and the packers association employed hundreds of Pinkerton agents and provocateurs to the same end. Organised by District Assemblies 27 and 54 of the K. of L., the men held firm till the employers weakened and offered concessions. On the eve of victory Terrence V. Powderley sent a telegram ordering the men back to work and so demoralised the ranks that the workers finally submitted to the employers' demands.

In 1881 there had been formed the Federation of Organised Trades and Labour which in 1886 gave way to the American Federation of Labour with Samuel Gompers of the Cigarmakers' Union as its first president. It set out to organise the skilled workers on a craft basis based on ideas directly opposite to those held by the Knights. The A.F. of L. began to draw members from the K. of L. and a struggle began between the two organisations. At the height of its strength a rot set in in the Knights of Labour. It became the victim of that most destructive element, the labour fakir and job-seeker. When the American capitalist class was getting its biggest fright from the K. of L., that body began to crack. It had attracted to its ranks all kinds of cranks, reformers, careerists, anarchists, professional people and even a few employers. It became a battleground for all sorts of ideas. When the eight hour day campaign fizzled out and the opposition of the A.F. of L. had to be met the Knights

declined rapidly. The employers took advantage of their plight and with blacklist, ironclad and Pinkerton detectives set out to smash them. As the Knights crumbled the A.F. of L. rose on its ruins.

By 1900 the Knights of Labour had ceased to exist as a national organisation with any influence, although it continued in some localities until 1917. So the all inclusive "grand national union of industrial workers" passed into the limbo of dead experiments. Such is the fate of all organisations that set themselves a political objective and try to solve the problems of capitalism without aiming at its abolition. They have their day of popularity, gathering support from all

kinds of people with varying ideas who will either divert it from its object or desert it, or both.

Books to read: *Class Struggles in America*, by A. M. Simons.
The Workers in American History, by James O'Neal.
The History of the American Working Class, by Anthony Bimba.
History of Trade Unionism in the United States, by Selig Perlman.
A Short History of the American Labour Movement by Mary Beard.
Brief History of the American Labour Movement, by the United States Department of Labour.

W. WATERS.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Ealing Branch.—In spite of the bad weather, Ealing Branch's special May canvassing drive was extremely successful. Thirty-four dozen SOCIALIST STANDARDS were sold in all, a record for the Branch. Members taking part were only sorry that two wet Sundays at the beginning of the month prevented more from being sold.

It is interesting to note that on the first follow-up, i.e., on the canvass following the first excursion into a new area, the percentage of people taking a second copy works out at about 50%. This proportion shows a slight tendency to fall in later months, but the number of "regular" readers usually evens itself out at about 2 in 5 of those first taking the "S.S." Most encouraging of all is the interest and eagerness shown by those taking the second and subsequent copies. Whether they agree with our case or not, it is quite obvious that they are politically interested and are prepared to consider our point of view. As one member of the canvassing team put it—"It seems to show that the apathy is not in the public, but in the members."

Preparations are now being made for another special drive to sell the "celebration issue" of the STANDARD in September. Will all members please note and contact the Branch Literary Secretary. Further members are also required, not to do the "preliminary spadework," which many of them for some reason think is hard and intimidating work, but to deliver the "S.S." to regular readers already established. Again, will they please contact the Branch Literature Secretary.



West Ham Branch are also carrying on a canvassing campaign. Thirty-four copies of the May "S.S." Figures are not yet complete for the June sales, but up to date results indicate that the figure should exceed that of May. These figures are an encouraging start to our campaign but compared with the splendid

achievement of Ealing Branch canvassing, the Branch's effort seems modest. However, it is not so long ago that West Ham Branch topped the thirty-two dozen mark and what has been done before can be done again. The Branch appeals to members to join with Ealing Branch and show the Party that canvassing is not only an extremely useful method of propaganda, but also a medium to which every member can apply time and energy.

Outdoor propaganda meetings at Station Road, Ilford, have met with great success. This is partly due to the attendance of several Branch members assisting with literature and general support. The same story cannot be told about the new station in East Ham, South. If members make every effort to support this new venture, good results will surely be the outcome.

Attempts are being made to secure a debate with the Peace Pledge Union and the prospects seem likely.

Any Branch member who is out of contact with the Branch and requires any information regarding Branch activity is invited to telephone ILF 2884. He (or she) is bound to be talked into doing something useful for the Party!

Fiftieth Anniversary Meeting.—An audience of about three hundred and fifty members and sympathisers attended St. Pancras Town Hall on Sunday, June 13th, when speakers told of the Party's activity over the years.

News Items from Abroad.—The Literature Committee report that a request for a copy of "Questions of the Day" has been made from Singapore.

Our Irish Comrades report that during the recent elections in Dublin, a newspaper reported the fact that "one voter in the constituency drew a pencil through all the candidates names and wrote—'Socialism is the only hope of the world' at the bottom of the paper." This same item of news was broadcast from Radio Eirean.

Central Branch Secretary would be pleased to have news of Comrades E. Clarke and O. Gelder (both of Hornsey Rise) and Comrade A. H. Marquis. These members have apparently changed their addresses without forwarding their new ones.

Dartford Branch, in spite of local conditions which, at present, make outdoor propaganda impossible, is nevertheless making solid progress in other directions.

A fresh attempt is being made to arouse interest

in local T.U. Branches, and the Branch Organiser is making every effort to arrange debates with other political parties.

To stimulate interest among Branch members a programme of monthly discussions has been drawn up with both Branch members and those of other Branches leading the discussions. A start was made to this programme in May when Com. A. Botterill of Dartford Branch opened a discussion on "Production, Past, Present and Future." This aroused considerable interest among Branch members and augurs well for the future discussions. These discussions will all be advertised in the SOCIALIST STANDARD. Party members and sympathisers, living in the North West Kent area, are

cordially invited to attend the discussions which are held on the second Friday of each month at Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield Street, Dartford. The club is seven minutes walk from Dartford Station and two minutes walk from the Green Line coaches, alighting point Dartford Market Place.

On June 11th, Com. A. Turner addressed the Branch, taking as his subject "The Declaration of Principles." There was a lively discussion until well after the normal branch closing time.

Dartford members are urged to support the Beresford Square, Woolwich, meetings, held Thursdays at 8 p.m.

P. H.

NOTES ON PARTY HISTORY

The Trade Union Question

THE Trade Union question was a very thorny one in the early years of the Party. Some of those who founded the Party had a leaning towards industrial unionism, whilst others were inclined to regard the trade unions as only another facet of Capitalism. These conflicting views were reflected in disagreements over policy that were brought to a head in 1906 when a number of meetings were arranged to discuss the Party's attitude to Trade Unionism.

Before reaching this discussion we will relate some of the events that led up to it.

At the Inaugural Meeting a motion had been carried instructing the E.C. to convene a special meeting of members as soon as possible "to discuss and determine the attitude of the Party towards trade unions." The E.C. arranged for this special meeting to be held on the 9th July at the Food Reform Restaurant in Farnival Street. Lehane, Anderson and Neumann, were appointed as a sub-committee to draft a resolution on trade unions to be submitted to the meeting.

The sub-committee reported that they were unable to come to agreement. The following resolution and amendment were then submitted to the Executive Committee meeting. We are giving them fully because they became the motions discussed at the special meeting.

Lehane and Jackson moved:

"Whereas the private ownership by the master-class of the means whereby the people live produces in the field of industry, as the inevitable outcome of the very conditions of modern society, an unceasing conflict between the propertied idlers and the propertyless workers, a conflict manifesting itself in the form of strikes, lock-outs and general social disturbance, and

"Whereas the workers in their endeavour to resist the encroachments of the exploiting class, or to secure higher wages, shorter hours, better conditions of labour, have largely organised themselves into Trade Unions, and,

"Whereas, the capitalist class in its desire to wring more profits, rent, and interest out off the labour of the workers, has for years been organised into rings, combines, and trusts with the object of controlling markets, raising prices, limiting production, reducing wages and intensifying labour, and,

"Whereas, the capitalist class through its judges has recently seized Trade Union Funds and shows its intention to further confiscate the property of the Trade Union organisations, thereby forcing members of the latter to turn their attention to political action.

"The Socialist Party of Great Britain, in General Meeting assembled, realising that this twofold organisation

of the hostile classes in society is preparing the way for the transformation of capitalist property into common ownership by limiting competition among the workers on the one hand and by combining and concentrating capital on the other, recommends its members to join the unions in their respective trades in order that by the spread of socialist enlightenment the members of the working class organised in Trade Unions may be enabled to prosecute the class struggle with the efficiency which results alone from clearly defined class-conscious action and taught to translate the industrial conflict into the field of politics, calls upon the Trade Unionists and all other wage workers in this country to join the Socialist Party in order that they may proceed to the conquest of the powers of Government as the indispensable preliminary to the overthrow and dispossession of the capitalist class and the establishment of a society in which the means and instruments for producing the necessities, comforts and luxuries of life will be the common and democratically controlled property of the whole people."

To this resolution Anderson and Neumann moved the following amendment:

"Whereas the Declaration of Principles of the Socialist Party of Great Britain is one of hostility to all other parties in the political field, and,

"Whereas the Trade Unions have definitely taken up a position other than that of the Socialist in that field.

"The Socialist Party in General Meeting assembled declares that while through other circumstances its members may be compelled to belong to such organisations, such members and any others who may deem it advisable to be in Trade Unions shall simply use their position therein to reiterate the Socialist position, but shall in no case accept any official position where their actions would be controlled by the Trade Unions instead of by Socialist convictions."

At the Executive Committee the Anderson amendment was carried by six votes to two. It was submitted to the General Meeting and Lehane's motion was moved as an amendment. After considerable discussion the General Meeting carried Lehane's amendment by twenty votes to nineteen and it then became the resolution. An amendment to it was proposed, but as it was too late to take it, the meeting adjourned with the request that the Executive Committee arrange another meeting.

The adjourned meeting on Trade Unions was continued on the 7th August. The following amendment to the Lehane's resolution was moved by Hawkins and Jacobs:

"The Socialist Party of Great Britain, recognising that the working class must be organised both politically and economically for the safe-guarding of working class interests and the overthrow of Capitalism, declares nevertheless

the ultimate uselessness of any economic organisation not based on the principle of working-class solidarity and recognition of the class-struggle.

"The Socialist Party of Great Britain, seeing that the trade unions of this country are sectional in character and unconscious of the historic mission of the working-class, cannot give unreserved support to these organisations, which have been frequently manipulated to suit capitalist interests. Members of the Socialist Party who belong to non-Socialist Trade Unions are therefore required not to accept any political office whatever in their Trade Unions, nor any office or position in the execution of the duties of which they may be required to take political action. They are, further, advised to form Socialist groups inside their unions for the purpose of common counsel and joint action to counteract any abandonment of working-class interests and to educate their fellow members in the principles of the class-struggle.

"The Socialist Party recognises that the Trade Unions are essentially economic organisations and that when based upon and informed by correct principles they are capable of fulfilling their function as such. It demands from the Trade Unions a similar recognition that the political action of the working-class must be revolutionary, and the function of, and can only be taken by, the Socialist Party.

"The political and economic organisations of the working-class should work together, in harmonious co-operation, and the Socialist Party desires, to this end, the affiliation of such unions as shall recognise the necessity for ending the wage-system and establishing the Socialist Republic."

This amendment was lost by twenty-five votes to ten.

Auger and Fitzgerald then moved that the following addendum be incorporated with the Lehané resolution:—

"That this meeting is of opinion that the only solution of the Trade Union problem will be found by forming within each union, in which we have members, groups which shall consider such unions constituencies for propaganda and electoral purposes and be under the full control of the Executive Committee of the Party, and resolves that the Rules of the Party shall incorporate this principle."

This addendum was carried by seventeen votes to nine, and was followed by a further amendment moved by Hawkins and Anderson:—

"That the Socialist Party of Great Britain, recognising that the Trade Union movement as at present constituted is organised on an unsound basis, declines to take part in its action until such time as these organisations shall be brought into line with the Socialist principle. In the meantime, members are permitted to join Trade Unions where compelled by economic circumstances, pending the organisation of Socialist Trade Unions."

The amendment was lost by nineteen votes to sixteen.

The meeting had now reached closing time without it being possible to put the Resolution on account of the many amendments. It was obvious that the disagreements were too sharp to enable a useful conclusion being reached. The meeting adjourned after passing the following curious resolution, which is some reflection of the nature of the discussion:—

"That this meeting adjourn until a decision is arrived at as to whether Trade Unions are political organisations and therefore if our relations thereto are covered by our Declaration of Principles."

The E.C. appointed a sub-committee to report on this resolution. The sub-committee submitted a statement which they suggested should be recommended as a preamble to the Lehané resolution. This statement pointed out that organisations of workers in various trades being primarily for economic action were not covered by that section of our Declaration of Principles which declares hostility to all other political

parties. The suggestion was carried by six votes to five.

At the September General Meeting Lehané's resolution was replaced by an amendment which was carried and then carried as the substantive Resolution with only a few dissentients. This resolution, moved by Hawkins and McNicol, was as follows:

"The Socialist Party of Great Britain declares that Trade Unionism is a necessary form of working-class organisation, but also declares that unless such unions are based upon the class-struggle they become useless and reactionary. Therefore members of the Socialist Party, as Trade Unionists, must work for the conversion of their trade organisations to the sound economic position which alone fits the Trade Union to co-operate with the Socialist Party for the overthrow of capitalism.

"As a matter of tactics the Party considers it advisable that Socialists should not hold office in non-Socialist trade societies where such office involves political action, and in all cases members of the Party must resign office whenever continuance therein would require deviation from the political action or policy of the Socialist Party."

It is worth noticing that this resolution was put and carried after the members had been discussing the question for seven or eight hours and most of them must have been too weary to realize the full import of what they were voting on.

At the following E.C. meeting a resolution, moved by Anderson and Crump, was carried, which stated that as the resolution on trade unions carried at the General Meeting was in conflict with the Declaration of Principles it be held in abeyance until the whole party has been consulted on the question.

On September 25th a Special General Meeting was held to discuss the Trade Union question. At this meeting the resolution at the previous General Meeting, by Hawkins and McNicol, was rescinded. After some motions had been put forward and rejected the meeting finally adjourned without coming to any decision.

At the General Meeting on 3rd December a resolution was carried that our Declaration of Principles is sufficiently clear to be a guide to members of the Party under any possible contingency and therefore no resolutions explanatory of our principles are necessary.

No further progress was made on the Trade Union question until the Annual Conference on the 20th April, 1905. At the Conference the following resolution by Watts and Harris was carried:—

"Whereas the Trade Unions, while being essentially economic organisations are nevertheless in many instances taking political action either to safeguard their economic existence or for other purposes, and

"Whereas any basis of working class political action other than that laid down in the Declaration of Principles of the Socialist Party of Great Britain must lead the workers into the bog of confusion and disappointment, be it therefore

"Resolved that this Conference of the Socialist Party of Great Britain recommends that all members of the Party within Trade Unions be instructed to actively oppose all action of the Unions that is not based on the principles of this Party."

There the discussion ended for the time being. It was brought up again as a result of a controversy over the action of the Bexley Heath Branch of the Party and a series of discussions were held from May, 1906, onwards, which were fully reported in the SOCIALIST STANDARD at the time. Before considering these discussions we will explain the Bexley Heath controversy as it had a bearing on the discussions.

GILMAC.

WORK AND HUMAN NATURE

Confirmation of the Socialist Attitude

EVERY Socialist has, at some time or another, met the "human nature argument." He has almost certainly had to do verbal battle with those who insist that work is distasteful to man, that he is naturally lazy and solely motivated by fear or greed. Such beliefs, we have maintained, correspond to no fundamental human traits, but arise from a confusion of human nature with behaviour under certain social circumstances.

Now along comes a book by a psychologist whose purpose in writing is obviously very far from advocating Socialism—but who nevertheless succeeds in demolishing most of the long-cherished ideas that have been put up against it. *The Social Psychology of Industry*, by J. A. C. Brown (Pelican, 2/6d.) is one of the best pieces of grist to come to the Socialist mill for a long time.

Dr. Brown packs his book with facts, quotations and sources of information, yet contrives also not to ignore the more personal side of his subject. In a critical survey of the history of industrial psychology he notes the reminiscences of Frederick Winslow Taylor, pioneer of Time and Motion Study: "It's a horrid life for any man to live not being able to look any workman in the face without seeing hostility there, and a feeling that every man around you is your virtual enemy." It is scarcely surprising that "Speedy" Taylor (as he was known to his colleagues) should have encountered such hostility, since he accepted without question the fact that every capitalist workshop exists first, last and all the time for the purpose of paying dividends to its owners.

Brown is critical of the old theory that human nature is unchanging and explicable solely in terms of biological instincts. He contrasts that with the new view that "does not accept instinct as an adequate explanation of human behaviour, and is more interested in how the biological drives are socially modified than in their mere existence; i.e. its explanations are in social rather than biological terms."

He elaborates this view in an analysis of the formal organisation of (capitalist) industry:

"(1) It is deliberately impersonal.

"(2) It is based on ideal relationships.

"(3) It is based on the 'rabble hypothesis' of the nature of man (i.e. it is assumed that competition leads to maximum efficiency, that when each man fights for himself the best interests of the group are served, and that men are isolated units who may be moved about from one job to another depending only on their ability to do the job)."

Brown rightly points out that such organisation produces harmful effects on people, particularly on the workers who are shifted about from one department to another like so much cattle. It is refreshing to note that he does not think that vast improvements have been made in workers' conditions under the "welfare state," which he likens to a model cowhouse with the workers as the milch cows.

Recognition for Effort

It is often said that it is human nature to want to "get on" (meaning promotion in the sense of higher formal status). Brown shows that this is just another

popular fallacy. "What people *do* want is a position in which it is possible to increase in prestige. Thus the average skilled craftsman does not want to become a supervisor or a factory manager—he wants to become a better craftsman *and recognised as such*."

Brown quotes Gordon Rattray Taylor's comment that "the best dentist in the community is not the less respected because someone else is the best ploughman", and adds "functional status leads to less rivalry and more satisfaction than derived status based on power or wealth." It is good to realise that, despite capitalist society which habitually defines status in terms of power or wealth, there are other and better ways of recognising the contributions of one's fellows to the social wellbeing.

The critics of Socialism who ask "who is going to do the dirty work?" can also learn something from this book:

"... the lowliness or nastiness of a job are subjective estimates... A doctor or nurse, for example, or a sanitary inspector, have to do some things which would disgust the most unskilled casual labourer who did not see these actions in their social context. Yet the status and prestige of such people is generally high.

"... although few people object to work which is unavoidably dirty or dangerous, they will certainly not forgive the sort of unpleasantness which indicates neglect of their interests on the part of management.

"Above all, it is the prestige of his working group and his position in it which will influence the worker's attitude to such jobs. If the prestige of his group is high and he is satisfied in his membership of it, the type of work he has to do becomes a minor consideration."

Hitherto, Socialists have frequently met the criticism that, with freedom from economic compulsion, no one will want to do certain necessary but dirty or dangerous jobs. If such explanations as Brown's become widely known and accepted, Socialists can expect less of these "dirty work" objections. In any case we have given the answer that people will not be called upon to do such work against their wishes, and that society as a whole will be prepared to do without any products obtainable only at the cost of harmful work.

It is clear that the system of society we advocate fulfils all the requirements considered desirable by Brown—namely, people who hold Socialist ideas see all actions in their social context; management will not exist as a body of individuals over and above the people who actually do the work; and the "working group," *being the whole of society*, will give the worker the best possible satisfaction in his membership of it. The "problem" of dirty work in fact resolves itself and is merged into the wider problem of wage-labour-capital society.

A Common Task

Dealing with the more positive question of desirable social conditions, Brown again makes statements that back up the Socialist case: "People do not like to be ordered about like automatons; they like to participate in a common task." Explaining this, he writes:

"Ordinarily men and women like their work, and at most periods of history always have done so. When they do not like it, the fault lies in the psychological and

social conditions of the job rather than in the worker. Furthermore, work is a social activity. . . . Even when their security and that of their children is assured, they continue to labour. Obviously this is so because the rewards they get from their work are social, such as respect and admiration from their fellow-men."

Brown effectively shows that Freud and others were wrong in believing that human nature is naturally aggressive, in the sense of a tendency to sadism or deliberate cruelty. "Aggression" as the need to master painful or unpleasant circumstances is, of course, quite natural. Similarly, the concept of leadership is reduced in the book to the view that "every man should be capable of some degree of leadership—influencing others towards a satisfying participation in collective effort." No Socialist would quarrel with such a concept and practice—because it is obviously very far removed from the prejudices we usually meet about "great men."

To Socialists, Brown's conclusions are both encouraging and disappointing. Recognising that present

society, more than any previous one, stimulates people's desires without being able to satisfy them, he believes that "the future approach to health is likely to be primarily in terms of the sick society rather than the sick individual." Yet he misses the significance of all he writes in suggesting that "it is necessary for the politician to bring about a state of affairs in which it is possible for the industrial worker to feel that his own interests and those of management coincide."

In the last paragraph of the book he tells us that it is up to us to decide whether society develops within a framework of fascist barbarism, communist intolerance, or Social Democratic humanitarianism. He leaves us in no doubt that he is strongly in favour of the latter. It would be a pity if this meant nothing more than a continuation in some form of capitalist society, when the book as a whole is so obviously pointing in the direction of new social relationships based, not on property, but on co-operative endeavour.

S. R. P.

NO ALTERNATIVE TO SOCIALISM

It is often stated by opponents of the S.P.G.B. that, after 50 years of propaganda, we have been unable to obtain the support of more than a few thousand members of the working class; that none of the social conditions which the present system has produced so far has led to anything remotely approaching the big change in the majority's outlook. They therefore argue that we must be expecting some new circumstances which we think will lead to this big change of outlook, or that we have no reasons for hoping for it. It is pertinent criticism which can be answered.

Firstly what the S.P.G.B. does claim is that the material conditions, that is the development of the productive forces and the knowledge of how to produce enough to satisfy men's needs, have been established with the development of capitalism. That there are certain countries which have yet to become industrialised on a large scale is true, but the industrial revolution is going on at a rapid pace in most of these countries. What is lacking is not the objective conditions but the subjective, that is the mass understanding and desire to establish Socialism. It is to propagate the idea of Socialism and to organise to establish it that is the task of the S.P.G.B. and of other Socialist Parties in the world.

The Class Struggle

The importance of the class struggle to Socialists is that it is the mechanism through the operation of which social changes are produced. The class struggle under capitalism arises from the relations of production, that is between the workers who have no means of living except by the sale of their labour power and the capitalist class who own either as individuals or collectively the means of production and distribution.

While capitalism continues, this struggle between the two classes will continue: there is no alternative: it is a struggle for existence. The largest organisations of the working class are the trade unions which attempt to maintain and improve the social conditions of their members, but they are limited by the economic laws of the capitalist system. Struggle as they may their

members remain wage workers, they remain an exploited class and suffer the effects of the continuance of capitalism.

There is no way out except Socialism. Now as in 1904, when the S.P.G.B. was formed Socialism is the only answer. No developments have occurred, no tendencies have been produced to show that there can possibly be any other alternative. Until Socialism has been established capitalism will continue and with it the effects of the capitalist system—world wars, slumps, booms, poverty, riches, frustration and social antagonisms, rivalry between national capitalist states. No-one, no organisation, has shown any way of maintaining capitalism without the conditions which arise out of the social system of to-day. The reason is simple: if the conditions arise out of the social system of society, only the abolition of that system will remove the conditions.

To maintain that Socialism is not inevitable means to maintain that the working class do not learn from their experiences of the effects of capitalism. It can be agreed that some people learn more quickly than others, that some have been more fortunate in that they have made contact with Socialist ideas and have obtained a knowledge of Socialism earlier than others. The S.P.G.B. never stated in 1904 that Socialism would be established in 50 years; the foundation members stated that Socialism would come when the majority understood and desired it. We in 1954 state the same thing.

Events have not stood still, the productive forces have developed still further, capitalism has spread throughout the world and its effects on countries like Russia and China have been tremendous. Two world wars in 50 years have shaken the system to its foundations. No one can maintain that these events have not produced an effect on the working class. Likewise the experience of nationalisation. For years we had to explain that nationalisation would not make any real difference to the working class; in a few years practical experience of the effects of nationalisation has proved our case. The political party which advocated nation-

lisation as the cure has now no other solution. It has been tried and found wanting.

Admittedly the growth of Socialist knowledge has been slow, but once again we ask what other alternative is there? The fact that there is no other alternative makes the situation clear; either we have Socialism or Capitalism will continue and we the working class will continue to suffer the effects of capitalism. Since we don't like things as they are we work to propagate and organise for Socialism. Those outside our ranks who are dissatisfied with the conditions of capitalism have yet to learn that Socialism is the only alternative and the only remedy; but the fact that they are dissatisfied, the fact that the class struggle exists due to the property relations of production, means that they are for ever seeking a way out.

Only those who consider that the working class is incapable of understanding Socialism and will never learn can deny that Socialism is inevitable. To such people we state that a class who produce all and provide for the needs and desires of the capitalist class are quite capable of changing the property relations and, by expropriating the parasite class, abolishing class society. The working class are not only capable but will be compelled to take this step in due course: there is no other alternative

D. W. L.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

LEWISHAM LECTURES

at

Davenport House, Davenport Road, Lewisham

on

Mondays, 19th and 26th July

at 8 p.m.

"Labour Theory of Value" - C. Evans

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN JULY

Wednesdays: Gloucester Road Stn., Kensington, 8 p.m.

Thursdays: Notting Hill Gate, 8 p.m.

Beresford Square, 8 p.m.

Friday: Earls Court 8 p.m. (sharp).

White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 7.30 p.m.

Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.

Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.

Hyde Park, 6 p.m.

Sundays: Finsbury Park, 12 noon.

East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.

Hyde Park, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

Katherine Street, Croydon, 8 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.

Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
Exmouth Market.

Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.

Thursdays: Tower Hill.

Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

ISLINGTON BRANCH DISCUSSIONS.

At Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.4. Thursday, July 8th, at 8 p.m. "Kenya and the Mau Mau."—Opener—W. Kerr.
Thursday, 22nd July, at 8 p.m., "Education and Illiteracy." Opener—R. Coster.

ISLINGTON PUBLIC MEETING.

At Islington Central Library, 68, Holloway Road, N.7., on Wednesday, 14th July, at 8 p.m. Title to be announced.

DARTFORD LECTURE.

At Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield Street, Dartford. Fridays at 8 p.m.
July 9th: E. Kersley, "Art And The Materialist Conception of History."
August 13th: H. J. Wilson, "Controversy And The Party."
Admission Free. Discussion.

CROYDON BRANCH LECTURES.

Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., W. Croydon (near West Croydon Station).
July 14th: "Psychology, Persuasion," and Socialism.—J. McGregor.
July 28th: "Origin of Capitalism."—E. Wilmont.
August 11th: "World Resolutions."—V. Phillips.

CORRECTION.

June issue. Page 92. Column 2, three lines from end should read "5,200 Million piastres."

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP.—Meets Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at Woodworker's Hall, Coupar's Alley, Wellgate. Correspondence to P. G. Cavanagh, 1b, Benrie Road, Dundee.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wednesdays 1st and 15th July, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

ROMFORD.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.) Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 35, Hunter Street, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets alternate Thursdays 3rd and 17th June at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd. (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmer's Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Grisley, 47, Eastbourne Grove, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month 7-9.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murtion, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visit is welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to D. Deutz, 21, Kenilworth Gardens, Seven Kings, Essex.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. 1st and 3rd Thursdays (1st and 15th July) Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. C. Langston, 99, Rommany Road, West Norwood, S.E.27.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruckin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

Fulham meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6 Koppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, July 11th and 26th, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Farmer, 46, Fernie Street, Glasgow, N.W.

Hackney meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197 Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Iveney 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7-9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. C. Rowan, 28, Rodbourne Avenue, Finchley, N.3.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec. 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushy Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 13th and 27th July, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding columns)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 600 Vol. 50 August, 1954

THE LABOUR PARTY SEEKS
A PROGRAMME

THE ECONOMICS OF
CAPITALISM

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY

THE MIDDLE CLASS

A ROSE BY ANY OTHER
NAME

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE IN
RUSSIA

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Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

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4

Perspective on Guatemala

IT IS CALLED THE LAND OF ETERNAL SPRING and appropriately so, for Guatemala does not know the changes of season such as we have in England. It is a country in which you are almost always in sight of a mountain or a volcano. It is the land of the marimba and the quetzal bird and of ancient intricately ornate architecture. Of dictatorship and malnutrition. Of lemongrass and citronella oil, quinine and cinnamon. Of cotton, chicle, coffee—and bananas. It is also a country regarded by United States Secretary of State John Foster Dulles as a possible danger to the peace of America.

Guatemala lies on the narrow connection between the land masses of North and South America. It is bordered by Mexico, British Honduras, Honduras and El Salvador. The Caribbean Sea lies to the east and southwards is the Pacific Ocean. It is a country about as large as England with a population of 3½ million—roughly the same as Yorkshire. Over two million of these are the religious, superstitious Maya Indians, who are unable to read or write, and live on maize, kidney beans and dried fish. The climate is agreeable enough to have attracted many American vacationists. The main port is Puerto Barrios, situated on the eastern coast and connected by an important railway to the capital Guatemala City. Through the country runs the Pan American Highway, which ribbons along the entire isthmus of Central America. A fertile plain stretches for about 40 miles inland from the Pacific; here are rich banana farms, cornfields and grazing lands.

The country's chief exports are coffee, bananas, chicle, essential oils and honey, of which coffee is the most valuable. Chicle is a latex which is bled from wild sapota trees and forms the basic ingredient of chewing gum. Guatemala has little mineral resources and so is not an industrial nation. Her principal imports are machinery, textiles, petroleum and vehicles. Most of her trade is with the United States.

The early history of Guatemala has been obscured by the passing centuries and the destruction of records in the Spanish conquest of the 16th century. We do know that by about three thousand years ago an advanced civilisation had cleared the jungle, raised crops and built splendid cities, which have left their ruins as evidence of greater days. Over two thousand years ago the Mayas had developed a calendar as accurate as the Gregorian (adopted by Great Britain in 1752) and were working a mathematical system

and submitted the following question to the membership for a referendum vote:

"Did the conference, in accepting as in order the Bexley Heath Resolution, exceed its power?"

The result of the Referendum was a majority favoured the view that the Conference had exceeded its power. But the majority was a narrow one, 35 to 34, with a large number of abstentions.

The Executive Committee circulated the result to branches and there let the matter rest. The Islington Branch, however, came back again, urging the E.C. to request the Bexley Heath Branch to forthwith rescind the resolution standing on its books. The E.C. replied that this could not be done without falsifying the records, and that they did not think it necessary to go any further in this matter.

The Islington Branch carried on their agitation. They claimed that the Bexley Heath Branch was still unsound and that the E.C. had failed in its duty by not pursuing the matter. As a protest they decided to suspend all propaganda activity until the Party had taken such action as would absolve itself from any charge of being unsound. They circulated the E.C. and all Branches to this effect. The E.C. pointed out to them that this action was neither in accord with Party discipline nor helpful to the cause of Socialism. Islington then circulated the branches charging the E.C. with criminal neglect and calling for their immediate removal. The E.C. then informed Islington that they would place Islington's unconstitutional action before the next Delegate Meeting for their decision and Party vote.

The E.C. submitted a statement to the Branches on the subject. Islington claimed that they only re-

ceived this statement four days before the Delegate Meeting and therefore had no time to place their own case in reply before the members.

The Delegate Meeting, which was held in July, 1906, considered the case and decided that the line taken by the E.C. was correct, and carried a resolution expelling the Islington Branch. This Delegate Meeting also expelled Bexley Heath Branch for supporting the S.L.P.

In August, 1906, the Islington Branch submitted to the membership a twenty page printed pamphlet entitled "Rocks Ahead." This was their reply to the E.C.'s statement. They denied that their action was unconstitutional and claimed that they were not interfering with the E.C.'s power to do as much propaganda in Islington as they liked. This statement was addressed to "Comrades" and put their side without engaging in personalities but bad feeling was developing. In December, 1906, while still claiming to be a Branch of the Party, they issued another pamphlet with the title "Another Political Wreck." This pamphlet was addressed "to the Working Class" and was badly marred by personal attacks.

Looking back on this dispute now it appears to the writer that the Islington Branch were on the right track when they urged that action should be taken against Bexley Heath Branch but they were wrong in trying to force the E.C. and the Party to take action by suspending propaganda. However, the dispute was one of the penalties that had to be paid in the work of hammering out a sound policy. The pity of it was that, owing to the feeling developed in the dispute, we lost some valuable members.

GILMAC.

(To be continued).

A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

WE are all "socialists" now. Let us witness the parade: The Churchill Tory socialists, the French Radical Socialists, the totalitarian "socialist" governments including the black, brown and red shirts, the New - Deal - Fair - Deal creeping "socialists," the Labour Parties of Europe, the Asiatic "socialist" and "communist" governments as well as those in Africa and South America, the colonial "socialist" groups, the various alleged socialist organisations throughout the world such as the Social Democrats, Trotskyites, the Communist parties, syndicalists, I.W.W., Socialist Labour Party and the Companion Parties for Socialism in Great Britain, Ireland, Canada, U.S.A., Australia and New Zealand. Then there are the anarchists, Christian "socialists," pacifists and a whole host of others. By no means have we exhausted the list of marchers in the "socialist" parade.

No wonder M. Rubel, in his dilemma: "The Uses of the Word 'Socialism'" in the Winter, 1954, issue of the American magazine *Dissent*, would prefer "to abandon the word socialism" and would substitute some other word for it that would "save the conceptual content once attached to this term."

It is significant of the times we live in to see every strata of society and the entire gamut of conflicting and opposing interests express themselves in

terms of socialism. They must in order to rally support. Even though socialism is NOT accepted by the world, it has become recognized and established as the hope of mankind.

M. Rubel describes very well the general nature of socialism that stirs and inspires everyone: *A society from which exploitation would be banished and in which the unfolding of each individual would be the condition of the freedom of all.* This is the basic appeal of socialism as an ultimate objective which serves as a rallying cry to muster support for the various groups marching in the parade of "socialism."

Let us suppose that some other word came into use to express the very essence of socialism, its "conceptual concept." This new word would then be subjected to the very same difficulties. The old word "socialism" would lose its meaning and significance. The new word would become abused in the same manner as the old one. Changing the name would not solve any problem for it doesn't come to grips with the real situation.

The Situation

The views of those who, patently, are supporters of the status quo are of no interest to this discussion, even though they may be listed in the parade of social-

work on a heavy-duty road from the port to Guatemala City. A state-controlled power station costing nearly £2 million is also under construction.

It is a story by now familiar enough. Along with the bananas and coffee Guatemala has grown its own exploiting class who aspire to own their country's wealth free from foreign interference. They expressed themselves in a nationalist party which found the American companies as the first obstacle to its plans. So it ran

foul of the U.S. State Department. For Central America has for a long time been dominated by American investment and influence. And in her conflict with Russia the United States cannot allow this power to be challenged and the security of the Panama Canal threatened. An unfriendly Guatemala was bound to suffer the attention of Mr. Dulles. The Land of Eternal Spring has felt the first wintry blast of the cold war.

IVAN.

THE ECONOMICS OF CAPITALISM

IN 1865 Marx brought out his "Capital," a searching analysis of the basis of Capitalism, and since that date it has been the backbone of the Socialist Movement. Here we can only attempt to give a brief outline of some of his conclusions

The Problem of Value

Under Capitalism the overwhelming mass of products are produced solely for the purpose of being sold at a profit; this was not true of any of the previous social systems, neither in ancient nor in mediaeval times. As the system lives by the continuance of buying and selling, that which determines the value of goods, the source of value itself, is a problem fundamental to it. The problem of value is an old one, as old as Aristotle who knew that there must be some property, apart from its usefulness, that was common to all articles of commerce, articles as unlike as bread and shoes, that made it possible to measure them one against another in a value relation. But he never got farther than putting the problem. The slave-based society in which he lived hindered even his acute mind from arriving at a solution, and it remained shrouded in mystery until buying and selling as a social system commenced to emerge in the Seventeenth century. The restraints upon industry and commerce melted into the right of everyone to do what he liked with his own, and the labourer, without property, was free to sell his working energy at whatever price he could get. Then the problem came up in an acute form as the rush to become rich developed. It was inspired by a desire to find out how wealth accumulated; or, to put it another way, to find out the source of surplus value.

Early Contributions to the Solution

The first real contribution to the solution of the question was made by Sir William Petty who, in his *Treatise on Taxes* (1662), stated that labour was the source of value, but, defining exchange value as money, he claimed that the particular labour employed in the production of the precious metals was the only labour that produced value. Later Benjamin Franklin tackled the problem in an essay entitled *A Modest Inquiry into the Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency* (1729), arguing that the value of articles is measured by the time taken to produce them. Money, however, according to him, had an extra value owing to the way it facilitated exchanges. Adam Smith followed with his *Wealth of Nations* (1777) in which he urged that the determination of the value of an article by the time taken to produce it was true of earlier

times but not of the time in which he lived. He attributed the accumulation of wealth to the division of labour and confused the value of what a labourer produced with the wages he received for producing it. The final contribution to the investigation, before Marx commenced to publish the results of his studies, was made by Ricardo in his book "On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation" (1817). In this book Ricardo got close to the answer, arguing that the values of all articles, including the value of labour-power, was determined by the labour required to produce them under the prevailing conditions of skill and methods. When applying his theory, however, he went astray because he did not see the distinction between labour and labour-power with sufficient clearness, and, hence, that the accumulation of wealth in the form of capital was based upon the buying and selling of labour-power. It was the discovery of this fact that gave Marx the key to the problem.

The Wealth of To-day

As the wealth of capitalist society consists of commodities, useful articles produced for sale, Marx commences his investigation with the analysis of a commodity. The things we eat and drink, the clothes we wear, the houses we live in, and the transport that conveys us to wherever we wish have all been made for the purpose of being sold. They appear in the shop windows or showrooms with price tags attached, or they appear in price-lists of goods offered for sale, or again they are advertised as something for which a price will be stated if requested. In other words they are goods produced for sale whether they be butter or battleships, salt or sables. Nothing is produced for sale unless it is considered to be useful to somebody for some purpose, whether the purpose be good or bad or both. Of course many things are produced and sold that the buyer finds are not what they were pretended to be; they were sold under false pretences and the buyer was defrauded; but this is not true of the mass of things produced, though many may not come up to the level claimed for them by their sellers. The wealth of to-day, then, consists of commodities—articles of commerce, things that are the subject of buying and selling. This is real wealth, or economic wealth. Whatever philosophers or poets may have said a man is considered wealthy to-day according to the amount of his material possessions or the size of his effective claim upon them; a man is considered poor because of his lack of them, and to the poor group the majority of society belong.

Why Things Sell at Different Prices

As useful articles there is nothing mysterious about commodities; they are pots and kettles, loaves of bread and pats of butter. The more you have of them the better off you are, but to get them you must pay varying prices. This is where the difficulty arises. Why do things sell at different prices? Why is it that those things which it is almost impossible to live without, such as bread, butter and milk, sell at low prices compared, for instance, with diamonds which we need far less? Why does a linen coat cost a few shillings and a fur coat cost a few hundred pounds? To answer these questions we must first find out what prices are and how they are arrived at. We have said that a commodity is a useful article, but it is also an article of value because, to get it, you must pay a price, its exchange value. We have already noticed that its usefulness has nothing to do with its price; we are speaking, of course, of the normal operations of commerce; the hundreds of pounds a man in the desert, dying of thirst, might be willing to pay for a bucket of water "has nothing to do with the case." In normal times a tiny diamond may exchange for as much money as many tons of bread, and the price of water is infinitesimal. As use-values commodities are of different qualities—softness, hardness, thickness, and the like; but as exchange-values they are of different quantities—20 loaves, 10 coats, 2 pairs of shoes, and the like. Exchange value is a relation of quantity, 20 loaves of bread for ten shillings; it is the quantity of loaves and the quantity of shillings that matter. In this exchange relation, 20 loaves equals ten shillings, the loaves and the shillings contain something that is equal in each and yet can be distinguished from their physical appearance; the loaves and the shillings are equal to a third thing which is neither the one nor the other. If we leave out of sight their usefulness, which is tied up with their physical properties, commodities have only one thing in common; they are products of labour, they are the result of the application of human labour to materials provided by nature. When looked at only as products of labour articles are values. Exchange-value, such as twenty loaves of bread equals ten shillings, is the only form in which the value contained in a commodity is, and can be, expressed. The quantity of labour required to produce twenty loaves is the same as the quantity required to produce ten shillings, for the ten shillings is a fixed portion of a fixed piece of gold, as we shall see later. Thus the size of the value contained in an article is measured by the quantity of labour contained in it, and the quantity of labour itself is measured by the time the labour is in action—so many hours of work. As the illustration indicates, value can only be expressed relatively, the value of one article in relation to another. It is only because they are the products of human energy that articles can be measured against each other as values, and from this it follows that their quantity relation to each other varies with variations in the productiveness of labour; at different times, with changes in the productiveness of labour, we may get more or less than twenty loaves of bread for ten shillings.

The Effects of Competition

Although the quantity of the value contained in an article is determined by the amount of labour required

to produce it, this does not mean that the less efficient the labour the greater the value of the article. All commodities are produced for the market, that is, for sale, and buyers endeavour to obtain each particular kind of commodity as cheaply as possible; they buy in the cheapest market. The system of commodity production is a competitive system and each producer tries to produce as cheaply as possible in order to get as large a share of the demand as possible. This drives each producer to search for new machines and better productive methods in order to produce goods cheaper than competitors. The result is that, in general, the amount of labour required to produce a given article is constantly being reduced. All producers are compelled to introduce the latest methods or be left behind in the struggle for markets. Where producers fail to keep pace with improvements in production they gradually lose their trade and are finally faced with ruin. Two hundred years ago hand work, or handicraft, was the prevailing method of producing commodities; then machines were introduced and gradually monopolised all forms of production. The hand workers who were unable or unwilling, to adopt the new productive form, fought a losing battle for decades until finally the only prices they could get for their products against the machine-made article had reached such a low level that they could not earn enough to live, and they had to give up. Thousands of them eventually died of starvation.

Thus, at any given moment, there is an average amount of labour, recognised by society in practice, that is required to produce a given product, and it is this average amount that determines the value of the commodity. Where, through inefficient organisation, more labour than is necessary is spent on the production of a commodity it will only have a value equivalent to the average amount necessary in a particular society at a given time. Value-producing labour is therefore average socially necessary labour, and the producer ignores this fact at the cost of ruin to himself, a ruin that we see every now and again reported in the newspapers.

Skilled Labour more Intense than Unskilled

There is another aspect of this value-producing labour that needs to be understood. Articles that are produced in a relatively short time appear to have the same value as those that take much longer to produce. At first sight this is puzzling. A group of men working on a farm in the country without machinery will produce articles of an annual value that is only equivalent to what the same number of men will produce in a few weeks in a highly organised machine factory. The explanation of this is that, in estimating value, it is necessary to consider all the labour that is incorporated in the production of an article. The more complicated the task the more intense the labour, that is to say the more of simple labour is compressed into an hour of its use. Nowadays, for instance, in even the comparatively simple labour possessed by a boy leaving school there is incorporated a portion of the labour of teachers who taught him, scientists who made certain knowledge available, and the labours of those who made the maps, tools, and other teaching appliances. Thus, in the machine made product,

Continued on page 127

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY—10

Barcelona 1937

JUST before three o'clock on the afternoon of May 3rd, 1937, three lorries were threading their way through the streets of Barcelona, heading for the huge Plaza Cataluña in the centre of the city. They emerged into the Plaza, pulled up outside the Telephone Building and a body of police guards climbed out. Their leader, Rodriguez Salas, Commissioner of Public Order, went into the building, accompanied by a few guards. As he climbed to the first floor of the ten-storey building shots were fired from the windows of the upper storeys. Reinforcements of police were rushed up and a cordon was thrown round the building; thousands of people gathered in the Plaza whilst excitement ran through the streets to all corners of the city. The tension that had gripped Barcelona during the past few weeks now broke out into street fighting.

Far away, around Madrid and in other parts of Spain, Spanish Government forces were fighting desperately against the armies of the rebel General Franco. The Government forces were re-inforced by the International Brigades whilst Franco was assisted by arms and troops from Germany and Italy. But the fighting in Barcelona was not the outcome of a Fascist rising; that had occurred and been subdued a year before.

Barcelona is the principal town in the Spanish province of Catalonia. It has a long history of revolt, insurrection and rebellion. In 1931 a Catalan Republic was proclaimed, the Spanish Republican Government issuing a decree whereby the Catalan Government was given a free hand in the organisation of the four provinces forming Catalonia, which thus became autonomous in respect of its own domestic affairs.

The Fascist insurrection which had broken out against the Republican Government of Spain in July, 1936, had met with success in some districts but had collapsed within forty-eight hours in Barcelona. Army officers had marched out the troops from the Atarazanas Barracks in Barcelona and deployed them in the streets and in the Plaza de España and the Plaza Cataluña. They occupied the Telephone Building and the Hotel Colon opposite.

In the Calle Cortes and the Via Layetana the troops were resisted by small detachments of police and civil guards. In a very short time the whole of the population of Barcelona, men, women and children, joined in the fight. Barricades went up, buildings were seized, roofs and strategic positions occupied, machine-gun nests were established and the battle spread all over the city. As soon as the troops realised that they were being used by their officers to effect a coup-d'etat, they broke ranks and fraternised with the people. From that moment the Fascist cause was lost in Barcelona, for a year or two at least.

The first shots were fired at five o'clock on the morning of Sunday, July 19th, and by Monday evening, except for some desultory sniping from the roofs, the battle was over.

A general strike all over Spain had been called in a radio announcement by Largo Caballero, President of the Union General de Trabajadores (General

Workers' Union led by Labourites and Communists). When the fighting was over in Barcelona the strike still held. All shops, cafes, workshops, factories, etc., were closed, and dead bodies lay out in the streets amongst the battle-scarred buildings.

The various trade unions and political parties set about re-organising and recruiting their militias, at the same time taking over the control of the city and surrounding district. Public eating-houses were opened, supplies were arranged, transport requisitioned and a system of passes and permits put into operation. Most goods were obtainable except cigarettes; looting was nil. Each of the trade unions and political parties took a prominent building for its headquarters and the red and black flag of the Confederation Nacional de Trabajo (Anarchist Trade Union) and the red flag of the Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista (party of united Maxists) flew from factories, printing establishments, municipal offices, hotels and the buildings of other industrial undertakings. The proprietors of cafes, hotels and industries, were given an opportunity to work at some suitable task, side by side with their erstwhile employees, on a co-operative basis. If they declined they were dismissed.

During the struggle against the Fascist rebels and immediately after, thousands of workers flocked to join the "left" political parties without any definite understanding of the political principles involved. The enthusiasm was immense. The Olympic Games teams, due to perform in Barcelona at that time, paraded through the city. The Federación Anarchista Iberica (Anarchist organisation) became the most popular party. The differences between many of the organisations that existed became indistinct and there was much federating and amalgamating. All the major organisations had their own armed militia and a Militias Committee was set up with representatives from each. A Supplies Committee was formed in a similar way. As these committees commanded the only armed force remaining in Barcelona, they assumed most of the governmental power.

The official Catalan Government was composed of Liberal Nationalists, moderate Labourites and Communists. Public services such as education and the administration of justice were left in the hands of this government whilst the committees made decisions on other matters, but, in order to re-assure foreign governments, the committees' decrees were sent to the government to be officially stamped.

This dual form of control caused complications and it was eventually decided to solve the problems by reconstructing the official government so that it included representatives of all the workers' parties and the trade unions. Both the anarchists, who were anti-parliamentarian, and the P.O.U.M., which was opposed to the united front, entered this new government. On July 31st, the new government was formed with Luis Companys, a Liberal, as president. Almost immediately conflict broke out between the various political groupings. The Anarchists and the P.O.U.M. wanted to keep military power in the hands of their own organisations, whilst the Labour and Communist par-

ties claimed that all armed forces should be under governmental control.

The Communists were anxious for support from Russia which the Russian Government was prepared to give providing such support did not conflict with its foreign policy of seeking friendly relations with Britain and France. Labourites and Communists, urged by the fear of foreign intervention in the civil war, argued that the war against Franco must take precedence over all other considerations. They called for the disbanding of the workers' armed patrols and the surrender of all arms to the government.

Towards the end of April, 1937, the situation became tense. Parties accused one another of being "Fascist spies" or "Fifth Columnists." In an endeavour to discredit one group or another and to alienate support from opponents, acts of sabotage were perpetrated which endangered the success of the war against Franco. On April 25th, Roldan Cortada, leader of a Labour Youth Movement, was murdered by persons unknown near Molins de Llobregat, a suburb of a Barcelona. Two days later the anarchist mayor of Puigcerda, Antonio Martin, was shot and killed. Each faction looked accusingly at the others. On May 1st, all May Day demonstrations were banned for fear of disturbances. Then came the incident at the Telephone Building on May 3rd.

The Telefonica building had been in the hands of the Anarchist since they first occupied it in the early days of the Fascist uprising, and they had a sentimental attachment to it. The government claimed that the Anarchists were tapping the telephone lines but the manner of government police occupation of the Telefonica on May 3rd was undoubtedly provocative.

Shooting broke out in all parts of Barcelona; practically all workers ceased work; trade union offices and political party headquarters were sandbagged; barricades were erected and machine guns placed. Luis Companys issued an order to disarm the workers' patrols but the police could not finish what they had started. The news and the trouble spread to other towns in Catalonia.

"The details of the street fighting which lasted from May 3rd. to May 7th. and cost some 950 dead, some 3,000

wounded and millions of pesetas' worth of ammunition in the worst street fighting in Europe since the Paris Commune, are still open to dispute. The general line is not." (Civil War in Spain, by Frank Jellink, page 545.)

The Anarchist leaders protested that they were not responsible for the fighting and, together with leaders of all other parties, appealed over the radio for a cease fire with orations that "drew tears but not obedience." (Jellink). The Anarchist trade unions issued an order to return to work, but fighting continued. Leadership in the fighting passed into the hands of the youthful enthusiasts of the smaller extremist organisations on both sides.

The Spanish Republican Government, which had moved to Valencia from Madrid, now sent General Pozas, with 4,000 police, to take over the military governorship of Catalonia. Armed police and soldiers withdrawn from the front at Jarama, arrived in warships at Barcelona harbour. The British warship, Despatch, headed full steam for the city. The fighting subsided but an occasional incident caused it to flare up in odd places. The Valencian police finally suppressed all resistance ruthlessly. The rising faded out and Catalan independence went with it. Franco finally conquered Barcelona, to which the Spanish Government had withdrawn, on January 26th, 1939, after months of heroic defence and terrific slaughter by air bombardment and naval blockade.

No capitalist government, whatever its composition, be it Liberal, Labour, Communist, Anarchist, or any mixture of them, can allow the armed forces of the state to pass out of its control. An armed working class is a menace to the system. In class society the dominant class must have at its disposal the power to maintain "law and order" amongst the class that it dominates, even when it is divided within itself.

Bibliography: "Civil War in Spain," by Frank Jellink; "The Truth about Barcelona," by Ferner Brockway; "The Truth about the Barcelona Events," by Lamda; "Murder in Spain," by Roberto (Article in International Review, June, 1937); "Spain," International Press Correspondence Special Edition, May, 1938.

W. WATERS.

THE MIDDLE CLASS

"What sort of person was Mr. Weare?"
"He was always a respectable person."
"What do you mean by respectable?"
"He kept a gig."

(Murder Trial, 1823).

THREE thousand pounds is a lot of money. By itself, it should provide a good-sized house or a small-sized business; as an annual income, it would give most people the same feeling it gave to Shaw's displaced dustman. Sixty pounds a week put him among the well-to-do—"shoved him into the middle class" and forced strange manners and morals on him. And the curious thing is that the middle class, from which there is no escape with three thousand a year, is the fortress too of the curates and

the come-down gentlefolk who have all the morals and all the manners and not even a dustman's income.

The middle class is a myth. Every age has its myths and fictions. Sometimes a social assumption is at variance with reality, and everybody knows it to be so—for example, the doctrine in Britain that the sovereign rules and makes laws; that sort of doctrine is called a fiction. On the other hand, a belief may be at variance with reality and still generally accepted as true; that is the nature

THE MIDDLE CLASS—continued from page 119

labourer's address does not matter; the bank manager's does. Some "middle-class" people pay more for their childrens' education than a labourer earns—not just because it is expected of them, but because we all reproduce our kind, and their kind needs to be well educated. It may sound ridiculous to use the word "subsistence" for wages of two or three thousand pounds a year, but in fact that is the position. All wages provide subsistence on different levels. For some it is food, clothing and shelter and the instalments on the television; for others, it includes the appearance and necessities of "middle-class" life.

In the last few years, numbers of the "middle class" have unconsciously acknowledged this by organizing to protect their standards of living. Civil Servants and Local Government workers have pressed continually for more pay, and the teachers' unions have shown less interest in education than in salaries. The truth is that, whatever groups may be distinguished on the grounds of income, culture and so on, they are distinguished within, and not from, the working class.

Of all the factors which tend to obscure the class position in capitalist society, the middle-class myth is perhaps the strongest. "Class-consciousness" is often used to denote middle-class snobbery, but it has a wider, more vital meaning. In its true sense, it is the most important thing that can be learned by working men and women.

R. COSTER.

THE ECONOMICS OF CAPITALISM—continued from page 116.

there is involved the labour of toolmakers, machine makers and hosts of other allied workers, all of whose labour appears in the final commodity and takes part in determining its value. Skilled labour, therefore, compresses in an hour of work several hours of simple labour.

GILMAC.

(To be continued)

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN AUGUST



Fridays:

Earls Court. 8 p.m. (sharp.)

White Stone Pond, Hampstead. 7.30 p.m.

Saturdays:

Castle Street, Kingston. 7.30 p.m.

Rushcroft Road, Lambeth. 7.30 p.m.

Hyde Park. 6 p.m.

Sundays:

Finsbury Park. 12 noon.

East Street, Camberwell. 12 noon.

Hyde Park. 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Wednesdays:

Gloucester Road Stn., Kensington. 8 p.m.

Goslett Yard, Charing Cross Road. 8 p.m.

New speakers welcome)

Thursdays:

Notting Hill Gate. 8 p.m.

Beresford Square, Woolwich. 8 p.m.

Beresford Square, Woolwich. 7.30 p.m.

Katherine Street, Croydon. 8 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Mondays: Finsbury Square.

Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.

Thursdays: Tower Hill.

Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

ISLINGTON MEETING

"Society and the H. Bomb"—Speaker, H. Waite.

Wednesday, 18th Aug. 8, p.m., at Islington Central Library, 68, Holloway Road, N.7.

SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.

Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee at the Head Office or to a local branch.

CROYDON BRANCH LECTURES.

Wednesdays, at 8 p.m.: Ruskin House, Wellesley Road, W. Croydon.

August 11th: "World Revolutions"—V. Phillips.

August 25th: "The Declaration of Principles and its Implications."—R. McLaughlin.

TREETOPS.—A few members will be going to Treetops for the week-end, September 11th and 12th. All those desirous of joining please write direct to Mrs. Plant, Treetops Holiday Camp, Farley Green, near Guildford, reserving your accommodation.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

AUGUST,



1954

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

THE LABOUR PARTY SEEKS A PROGRAMME

FOR political parties dependent on leaders it is much better to travel hopefully than to arrive. The leaders' promises to remove some present evils at a not too distant date keep members and voters united and enthusiastic. The led are willing to accept with a great deal of trust the belief that the reforms they are working for will produce the desired beneficial results. It is with achievement that the testing time comes and the party's cohesion or even its existence is imperilled. A case in point is the long struggle waged early this century to give the American people the benefits of prohibition. When it came the beneficiaries decided that it was more of a curse than a blessing and there followed a much shorter struggle, to get rid of it. This of course, shattered the prohibition organisations; but, if things had gone differently and prohibition had turned out to be even half-way up to expectations and had become permanent this too would have ended the organisations for their work would have been completed.

Problems like these are responsible for the present doubts, dissensions and struggles for leadership in the British Labour Party. In their six years of power after the war, they carried out much of the programme that had kept them going for half a century. They nationalised basic industries, elaborated the national Insurance schemes, introduced the Health Service continued war-time arbitration in industrial disputes gave

independence to India and other countries in the Empire and put into operation their plans for bringing peace into international relationships through the United Nations and their "new approach" to foreign governments. Then they sat back waiting for the applause that did not come. According to the book a grateful electorate should then have rallied to Labour and spurned the Tories. Instead, disappointment with Nationalisation and the utter failure of Labour's foreign policy had the result of dividing the electorate about evenly between the Labour and Tory parties. To the extent that they approved the insurance schemes and the Health Service they decided that these were as much Tory schemes as Labour ones, as indeed they were, for the Tories were astute enough to adopt them and not leave them to figure as a Labour Party monopoly. In the meantime Labour's experience of running capitalism in a world beset with peril for the British Empire capitalist group had made them as safe for the preservation of the interests of that group as the Tories themselves. So now the hopes and the fire have departed from Labour ranks and they are trying to find how to regain what has been lost. They are seeking new leaders and new programmes that will carry them back to power.

The problem has been surveyed by Professor G. D. H. Cole and by Mr. Donald Chapman, formerly secretary of the Fabian Society; by Mr. Cole in a pamphlet *Is this Socialism?* and by Mr. Chapman in the *Political Quarterly*.

Mr. Cole is certain that if the Labour Party at the 1950 and 1951 elections had come out boldly for more of the old programme—as some Labour leaders thought they should—they would have lost votes not gained them. And Mr. Chapman finds that the workers, no longer spurred on by mass unemployment, have largely lost what desire they had for seemingly radical changes. And it is certainly true that the quite unprecedented nine year period of unemployment averaging less than two per cent. has robbed the Labour Party of the asset it had when mass unemployment constantly stirred the workers to discontent with Tory governments between the wars.

Their analysis of the troubles of the Labour Party are convincing but it is when we look at their suggested remedies that we see how little they have to offer. Mr. Cole suggests that inheritance should be virtually abolished, that dividends should be limited, and that part of profits re-invested as capital should be taken by the State. This assumes, of course, that nationalisation by a back-door method could be foisted on electors who have become less enamoured of straight nationalisation, and that having got complete State capitalism they would like it.

Mr. Chapman does examine another proposition, that goes by the misleading title of "workers control" in industry, but decides that by and large the workers are not much interested in it.

It would, however, be a mistake to conclude, because Messrs. Cole and Chapman cannot find issues likely to put new life into the Labour Party, that the problem is insoluble. We can be sure that capitalism itself will go on producing evils at home and abroad around which the Tory and Labour parties (or other capitalist-reformist parties in their place) can build up

rival programmes to form the basis of electoral battles.

There is, too, the real alternative—the one propounded by the S.P.G.B. None of the disappointments that gnaw at the supporters of the Labour Party are unforeseen. Fifty years ago the S.P.G.B. foretold that nationalisation would solve no working-class problem—at present the capitalists think that it isn't much use to them either—and that however much capi-

talism is reformed and bureaucratised the world would still find no solution for social problems except Socialism.

When, therefore, the *Manchester Guardian* (1 July, 1954) asks "How can we make British politics—and parties—live again?" the Socialist knows the only worth-while answer.

NOTES ON PARTY HISTORY

The Islington Dispute

THE Islington dispute occurred in 1906. It revolved around our attitude to Trade Unions, also to the question of whether a Branch of the Party was in order in suspending propaganda activity with the object of forcing the Party to reverse a decision that the Branch considered a fundamental and dangerous mistake.

At the end of December, 1905, a certain R. A. V. Morris attended an Executive Committee meeting and asked what was the difference between the S.P.G.B. and the Socialist Labour Party. After his question had been answered he expressed himself as satisfied. A week later a request to form a branch of the Party in the Bexley Heath District was received, and one of the signatories was R. A. V. Morris. On the 9th January, 1906, the Executive agreed to the formation of the Bexley Heath Branch.

From what immediately followed one is forced to the conclusion that the formation of the branch was a shady manoeuvre planned by people interested in the Socialist Labour Party.

In February, 1906, the Executive Committee were receiving items for the Party Conference Agenda. On the 20th February the following item was received from the Bexley Heath Branch:

"That the E. C. be instructed to approach the S. L. P. with a view to the union of the two parties."

The E.C. declined to put this item on the Conference Agenda and gave the reason in the resolution that was passed on the subject, which was as follows:

Neumann and Jackson moved:

"That the Bexley Heath and District Branch be informed that the E. C. does not see its way to put their resolution on the Conference Agenda as it conflicts with the Declaration of Principles of the Party; further that it be pointed out that when R. A. V. Morris attended the E. C. before the Bexley Heath Branch was formed he raised the question of the existence of the two bodies and expressed himself satisfied with the explanation given."

At the 1906 Conference the Bexley Heath delegates brought the matter forward and asked the Conference if the E.C. was in order in declining to put their item on the agenda. The Conference overruled the action of the E.C., restored the item and discussed it. Arising out of the discussion two resolutions were moved and lost.

Before giving the text of these resolutions it should be mentioned that one of the founders of the Party, and a very active speaker and writer, E. J. B. Allen,

had been vigorously supporting the ideas of the Industrial Workers of the World, but not supporting the S.L.P. There had already been trouble with Allen and an article of his committing the Party to support of the I.W.W. had been rejected.

The first resolution referred to above was as follows:

Humphrey and Hopley moved:

"Whereas pure and simple Trade Unions foster trade struggles and keep the workers divided, and whereas the unity of the workers on the economic field, and whereas, only by the unity of the workers in a Socialist Industrial Union, as well as in a Socialist Party is sound progress possible, Resolved that the Socialist Party of Great Britain condemn pure and simple unionism, and calls upon its members inside and outside of existing trade unions to carry on an organised propaganda in favour of revolutionary industrial unionism as the first step towards the establishment of a Socialist Industrial Union to work in co-operation with the Party for the overthrow of capitalism."

E. J. B. Allen, I. W. Allen, Leigh and Phillips supported the resolution.

Neumann, Fitzgerald, Jackson and Pearson opposed it.

The resolution was defeated on a card vote: 81 for; 111 against.

It was then agreed that a Special Meeting be called to discuss Trade Unions and a poll of the Party be taken on all resolutions arising therefrom.

Later in the Conference Morris and Carter moved:

"That the E. C. be instructed to approach the S. L. P. with a view to the union of the two parties."

Fairbrother, Humphrey and Phillips supported the resolution and Jackson, Mrs. Anderson, A. W. Pearson, Neumann, Fitzgerald and Gray opposed it. The resolution was lost by 4 votes to 9.

After the Conference the Islington Branch sent a resolution to the new E.C. [the Executive Committee at that time, and for long afterwards, was appointed by a vote of the membership which was counted at the Conference] repudiating the action of the delegates in discussing a motion which was in direct conflict with the D. of P., endorsed the action of the previous E.C., and called upon new E.C. to ignore the instructions of Conference to take a Poll of the Party on the Conference findings, and to obtain from Bexley Heath Branch a formal withdrawal of its resolution.

The Executive Committee accepted the proposal

which was the first to use the concept of zero. Around the year 900 the Indians for some reason emigrated to the Guatemalan highlands and the jungle overgrew the deserted cities. The civilisation declined and the Mayas split into warring tribes.

In 1523 the Spanish explorer Hernando Cortez sent a small band of conquistadors under his lieutenant Don Pedro de Alvarado from Mexico into Guatemala. There was little in the divided native tribes to resist the Spaniards' superior equipment and military technique and by 1524 the country was under Spanish control. With the conquistadors came Roman Catholicism and the Inquisition. The Catholic Church assisted in the suppression of the country. In 1593 Pope Alexander VI issued a bull giving Spain sovereignty over Central America, including Guatemala. When the Spaniards found the resistance of the Rabinal Indians too fierce for them, Padre Bartolome de las Casas and other priests penetrated the Indians and won them over by missionary work. Incidentally, it was agriculturally-inclined Padre Tomas de Berlanga who introduced the first rootstocks of the banana plant from which have grown the huge plantations of the United Fruit Company of Boston, U.S.A.

The story of the Spanish conquest is re-told at the Maya fiestas, when masked Indians perform the Dance of the Conquistadors. The dance, to the music of the marimba—an instrument like an outsize zylphone—is an endurance test lasting for several hours. It represents the 1523 hand-to-hand battle between Alvarado and the Maya chief Tecum Uman, in which the Indian lost his life. This was a crucial victory for Alvarado.

The decline of Spain loosened its hold upon the Americas and in 1821 Guatemala was able, like other South American countries, to declare her independence. Then followed a succession of revolutions and presidencies, each relying upon bloodshed and tyranny for its position. In 1873 Justo Rufina Barrios deposed the ruling president and established a dictatorial government. Barrios did much to develop the resources of Guatemala and when he was killed in 1885 he was a national hero. The port of Puerto Barrios is named after him. His death was followed by more revolutions and a procession into and out of the presidential chair. In 1931 General Jorge Ubico was elected to power.

Ubico led a pitiless dictatorship which dissolved the trade unions and gave power to the landowners, greatest of which is the United Fruit Company. When he was forced to resign in 1944, Ubico left less than two per cent. of the population owning 78 per cent. of the land. For six years Guatemala was ruled by three army officers headed by Dr. Juan Arevalo, until in 1950 Jacob Arbenz was elected president. Now, in face of the invasion, Arbenz has fallen and the presidential procession has started again.

The invasion came after several weeks of pressure from the U.S.A. The resolution sponsored by Mr. Dulles at the Caracas conference last March was directed against the Arbenz government and provided a legal weapon for future use. More essentially, America has for some years refused to sell arms to Guatemala, who not unnaturally took her custom elsewhere. The arrival at Puerto Barrios of weapons from Poland touched off a fine panic in the State Department and provoked the American request to Britain and other countries to allow the right to search their ships. Thus was quietly

buried the traditional American lip-service to the freedom of the seas. When Guatemala was attacked America, tongue in cheek, denied the evidence of an invasion. On the other side of the table Russia forgot about Eastern Europe and came out in defence of the rights of small nations. As *The Economist* put it, rather neatly, it was "war through the looking glass . . ." with " . . . all the words . . . the wrong way round." But that is nothing new.

What are the reasons for the conflict in the little Central American state? Well, first there's the Panama Canal, the vital snip of the scissors which cuts America in two. A glance at a map will show the importance of the canal as the short cut between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. As the quetzal bird flies, Guatemala is 800 miles from Panama and is separated from it by several countries which are friendly to the United States.

Then there's the United Fruit Company, which owns most of the banana plantations of Guatemala. The company says that it has lost control of 400,000 acres in the recent land nationalisation; it is in dispute with the government over the scale of compensation.



Its local legal representative is Dr. Juan Manuel Galvez, President of Honduras, whence came the invaders of Guatemala. Apart from its landholdings, the United Fruit Company owns the dock and harbour installations at Puerto Barrios. Through International Railways of Central America it has virtual control of the entire Guatemalan railway system, including the busy line from Puerto Barrios to Guatemala City. It is noteworthy that the first warnings about Guatemala came from the State Department at the same time as the early expropriation of United Fruit Company land. Foreign control is also strong in the field of electric power, four-fifths being supplied by a company subsidiary to an American firm.

What about Russian interference? Well, the Arbenz government could not be described as a follower of Moscow, although it did suffer the influence of Guatemalan Communists. There was in Guatemala an active opposition with its own newspapers. The Arbenz regime was crudely nationalist—an outlook bred from its attempts to break the American near-monopoly of the country's wealth and develop a modern industrial state from a semi-feudal country. In competition with the foreign companies the government was building its own wharves at Puerto Barrios and, with the help of a United Nations Technical Assistance scholarship in highway construction, had commenced

ists. But we are very much concerned with those who allege adherence to socialism. In the name of socialism, all manner of views are presented. There are those who are disappointed at the slow growth of the movement and propose immediate demands; they feel that socialism is a long way off and, in the meantime, we have immediate problems to solve, that we must face "reality" and be "practical." Some consider reforms and government ownership as gradual steps to socialism. Some consider state capitalism (often called state socialism) as a form of socialism, if not socialism itself. Necessarily, these are efforts to administer and reform capitalism. All this leads to erroneous concepts, particularly, identifying capitalist relationships as being socialist ones. The common characteristic of these viewpoints and activities is to divorce the socialist objective from the policies that are pursued. The means become the goal and objective.

It has become the fashion of many "profound" pundits of socialism to dismiss as dogmatic and sectarian* those who realize that socialist activities must not be disassociated from the socialist objective. We see this same attitude in some of the articles in *Dissent*.

It is tragic to observe the net result of all these "practical" movements. Being freed from "dogmatism and sectarianism" (which really means: freed from a scientific analysis of social forces), we find what? Hosts of workers are bewildered by the deceptions and disappointments of the "socialist" as well as "communist" election "victories" in all corners of the globe. Especially, we find vast numbers disillusioned because of their false hopes in Russian state capitalism.

At no time have any of these widespread and tremendous efforts been devoted to spreading socialist consciousness. Particularly damaging to socialist understanding has been the stress on nationalism and patriotism which is so foreign to the very spirit of socialism, which is a world-wide society, a social system. What a waste of such expenditures of energies! One wonders how much further the socialist movement would have been advanced without these vast diversions and had the same efforts been devoted to socialist activities.

Is it difficult to realize why the word "socialism" has lost its "conceptual content" to so many who never really grasped the socialist content?

What is Socialism?

The case for socialism is not difficult to grasp. It really is simple.

There are three phases of socialism. They are interrelated and interdependent and part of an unfolding process.

(1) Socialism first appears on the scene ideologically. It arose out of the material conditions of the earlier portion of the 19th Century. This is the birth of socialist science. It is materialistic. It recognizes that everything in existence is interrelated and in

*Just because of their scientific attitude, socialists are constantly re-examining their theories in the light of historical developments and experience. So far, unfolding events have confirmed and corroborated the socialist case and nothing of a fundamental nature has occurred to repudiate the general theories of the science of socialism.

a constant process of change. (In a very real sense, it might even be said that socialism is the science that integrates all branches of science into a correlated whole.) Specifically, it indicates the general outlines and the processes of social evolution and, more particularly, the nature of capitalism. It explains how the seed of the forthcoming society is fertilized within the womb of an old society.

(2) Then, socialism arises as a movement. It is not alone sufficient to understand the world, the task is to change it. Its very raison d'être is to exert all its efforts to arouse the working class and all others to become socialists so that the vast majority becomes conscious of its interests, and proceeds to institute socialism. The socialist revolution cannot be rammed down the throats of "followers." The socialist revolution is majority, conscious and political. It is and can only be democratic by its very inherent nature. It is not a new ruling class come to power with a subject class having to submit.

(3) Finally, in the course of its evolution, capitalism has laid the groundwork for socialism, a classless, money-less, wage-less society. Socialism is "a society from which exploitation has been banished and in which the unfolding of each individual would be the condition for the freedom of all."

The Answer

In light of all this, what constitutes being a socialist? Broadly speaking, it is one who realizes that capitalism can no longer be reformed or administered in the interest of either the working class or society; that capitalism is incapable of eliminating its inherent problems of poverty, wars, crises, etc.; and that socialism offers the solutions for the social problems besetting mankind since the material conditions and developments—with the single exception of an aroused socialist majority—are now ripe for a socialist society.

If an organization or an individual or a "victory" supports the continuation of capital-wage labour relationships by advocating or organizing to administer an improved, bettered reformed status quo (capitalism) instead of coming out for the socialist revolution (a frightening word which only means a complete social-economic change) then—it is NOT socialist.

The need for educating, agitating and organizing to keep the issues clear cannot be overemphasized. All too many liberals, radicals, intellectuals, and, what is far worse, the much greater numbers of rebellious workers resisting their sad lot in life—all these, sincere, earnest and devoted—have been washed in and out of the so-called socialist organizations and their fringes and in the entire process never did get an insight or an inkling as to what it is all about.

The simplicity of the socialist case is buried by friends and foe alike in mountains of "day-to-day" ISSUES so that there never is and never can be time for them to become acquainted with the science of socialism, i.e., the socialist case.

The real need today is the understanding and knowledge of socialism rather than changing the word "socialism."

—I. RAB.

(Reproduced from the *Western Socialist*, May-June, 1954.)



PRIVATE ENTERPRISE IN RUSSIA

WHEN all the arguments for the existence of Socialism in Russia have been exhausted by Communist Party members and their sympathisers, they usually conclude with the idea that "At least Russia has, in abolishing private enterprise, taken a great step towards Socialism." Even if Russia had nationalised everything, this would not mean that they have got Socialism but only State capitalism. Avowedly capitalist countries have never hesitated to nationalise industries when it suited them. But has Russia abolished private enterprise?

Readers Digest for May, 1954, condenses an article from the *Wall Street Journal* by Tom Whitney who has recently returned to the United States after nine years in Russia, first as chief of the economic section of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, and later as correspondent for the Associated Press. He wrote "If you dial a certain telephone number in Moscow you can arrange to buy a TV set within 24 hours—instead of the two or three months it takes to get one from the State run electrical appliance store. Calls to other Moscow numbers will summon such people as washing machine salesmen, doctors, repair-men, and house builders—all private enterprise ready to provide speedier or higher quality service than the Soviet Government offers."

Many traders, asserts Whitney, wait (or more likely get the tip) of a new delivery of goods arriving at a store where there has been a shortage for a long time, and buy a huge quantity and resell them for a handsome profit to those not willing to wait or stand for hours in queues. Rosa Martynova, a member of the Moscow branch of the Komsomol (Communist national youth organisation), is now serving five years for this practice. Another eminent party member, M. Kogan, obtained several thousands of watch movements from the government, assembled them and netted £89,000 profit before the government woke up! There were two brothers who sold leeches to the government (they are still widely used there and were applied to Stalin before he died), made 400,000 roubles profit a year on the sales.

Everywhere in Russia, and in every branch of activity, according to Whitney, there is some private enterprise and it can successfully compete with the inefficient state enterprises. Of course if the goods are just stolen, as they frequently are, or if the raw material has been wangled from a government store, then competition should not be too difficult. Whitney claims that even landlords can get rents above controlled prices, and he witnessed that a friend of his in Moscow signed a lease for a room priced at 265 roubles a month; but on top of that the landlord demanded extra cash to boost the total rent 450 per cent., claiming that he would go bankrupt if he only charged the official rent!

How can the police prevent the buyer of a television set from selling it to a "friend" for a profit? Whitney claims that only 100,000 TV sets are at present coming on to the market annually, yet the demand is for at least ten times that quantity.

He points out that not all private enterprise is illegal in the U.S.S.R. Soviet law permits individuals to work privately under licence at any of about 20 trades and professions, including medicine, hair-dressing, book-binding, house-repairing, etc. Russians can work full time at such jobs and part-time at many others. House repair must cover a multitude of occupations, and with a few friends (or business partners in state warehouses) can be very lucrative. Taxes on private incomes are levied as a recognised thing.

Stealing from government factories keeps private enterprise going very profitably according to Whitney. In most of the large towns medical, dental and even teaching is done privately. State-run clinics are inefficient and always overcrowded. One Russian doctor maintains a private practice in Moscow as a homeopath and earns over 16,000 roubles a month. His income from official work could never approach that mark.

Whitney concludes his article by saying that "You can get private help in practically any service field in Moscow—if you can pay the price."

Private enterprise is hard to stamp out, even with secret police, who are sometimes as corrupt as the private traders. So long as the workers don't understand or want anything else, the profit motives of society will survive. There is no socialism in Russia. State capitalism is the dominant form, with private enterprise, according to Whitney, as a flourishing subsidiary.

H. JARVIS.

ISLINGTON BRANCH DISCUSSIONS

CO-OP HALL,

129 SEVEN SISTERS ROAD

Thursday, 12th August, 8 p.m.

"Socialism and Art"

E. Kersley

Thursday, 26th August, 8 p.m.

"Social Psychology of Industry"

J. Rowan

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

The following literature is on sale at Head Office to branches and members.

Marx's Theory of Value, paper 2s. 6d., cloth 4s. 6d.	
Revolution and Counter Revolution ...	3s. 6d.
Anti-Dühring ...	8s. 6d.
Political Geography ...	4s. 0d.
British Labour Movement ...	1s. 0d.
Wage-Labour and Capital ...	1s. 0d.
Value, Price and Profit ...	2s. 0d.
Dialectics of Nature ...	12s. 6d.
Origin of the Family ...	8s. 6d.
Outline of Man's History ...	4s. 0d.
Vol. I. Capital (re-printing) ...	15s. 0d.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Ealing Branch. The Branch Literature Committee reports that the follow-up during June of the May S.S. drive has been very encouraging. Four areas are now being regularly followed up—Greenford, South Ealing, Cuckoo Estate, and Acton. They hope to open up soon in Hounslow, Southall, Chiswick, and Wembley, but to do this more effectively they would like more members to come forward to do the regular rounds in the established areas.

Activities in August may be curtailed somewhat through holidays, and the Committee appeals to all members to do their utmost to assist during this month.

The Branch Literature Committee has been in existence a year now, and all members are agreed that the experiment of having a group of people instead of one person responsible for literature has been a great success. To do a Branch's literature work well is really too much of a job for one member, and enthusiasm, activity, and results, are much more easily achieved by a group.

A further special sales drive will be carried out in September in connection with the anniversary issue of the *Standard*, and all members are asked to help to make the campaign a success. Details will be appearing in next month's S.S.

Hackney Branch. Having received a visitor from Ealing who gave the members an outline of their methods and results in canvassing the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* from door to door. It was immediately decided to form a team to visit a large new estate in Homerton, with eminently satisfactory results, on the following Sunday morning, three dozen S.S. being sold. The members engaging in the sales drive were so satisfied that they decided to try Friday evenings in addition, and two of them sold 18 copies at their first attempt. As there are many new estates now being completed in this district there seems to be unlimited scope for expanding sales in areas where the Party is little known. Weekly, instead of fortnightly, Branch meetings will be held in future, and members who think they can help with sales, are invited to hear the reports of other members.

The Literature Canvassing Committee takes this opportunity of reminding all branches and members of a proposed intensive drive of THE *SOCIALIST STANDARD* during September.

If your branch has not yet commenced canvassing, you are urged to bring the item up at the next business meeting as a matter of urgency. See that a canvassing organiser or committee is appointed to co-ordinate efforts and get to work without delay. There is no time to lose. Permanent sales of the S.S. must be stepped up and we are presented with a golden chance to do just this with the arrival of our anniversary number.

Many comrades fight shy of canvassing, yet this is really quite regrettable since it is extremely useful activity and there is very little to learn, as most members who try it find out after completion of their first dozen calls or so. What is more, it does result in a

regular list of subscribers, given a little time and perseverance.

The Committee will be very pleased to send one of their members to any London branch to give practical assistance and advice. Provincial branches will be contacted by post. Don't delay! Start today! Enquiries and requests for help should be addressed to:—

The Literature Canvassing Committee,
c/o 48, Balfour Road,
Ealing, London, W.13,

and will be given prompt attention.

Swansea Branch continues to make headway even if painfully slow. Membership has increased from six to eight members, contact is maintained with a number of interested sympathisers. From time to time meetings have been held including one debate with the Welsh Nationalist Party.

The Branch has challenged the local Tory prospective candidate to debate, also the Communist Party. The Tories declined the offer whilst the Communists maintained a discreet silence.

The Branch has also corresponded with the W.S.P. of U.S.A.

Use is being made of the local press on every suitable occasion and we have been fortunate in putting the Party's case before the public frequently.

Bloomsbury Branch will not be holding meetings during the month of August as the Conway Hall is closed during the month. Meetings will recommence in September and it is hoped that more members will arrange to regularly attend. The Branch room is pleasant, and as the Conway Hall is so well situated for travelling facilities members should find it quite an easy matter to get to the Branch regularly.

P. H.

SEPTEMBER SPECIAL NUMBER

We would again remind members and sympathisers that we urgently require donations to cover the extra cost of the September Special Number of the "Socialist Standard." Unless sufficient money comes in quickly we will have to be more modest in our proposals. We urge those who are interested in seeing this Special Number a worthy commemoration of fifty years of our paper to do their best to see that we can accomplish this object. So far the response has not been what it should be and the time is getting short.

NOTES BY THE WAY

Population, Food and Fuel

In recent years much interest has been shown by governments, agricultural experts and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of United Nations in problems of world food supply. With world population not only increasing, but increasing at a faster rate, the technical problems of raising food output had to be and have been solved, though the prospect of the solutions being fully applied in a capitalist world is another question for capitalism is more concerned with what is profitable than with the human tragedy of half the population of the world being underfed.

But along with food there is also the question of meeting the rapidly growing demand for fuel supplies. It is the realisation of this that has made atomic energy an industrial as well as a military question and explains why "exclusive of weapons" the British Government is spending £54 million a year on atomic research and development. (*Financial Times*, 31/7/54.)

According to studies made for the United States Atomic Energy Commission the known resources of coal, oil, water-power and other existing sources of energy are likely in future decades to fall short of the needs of industry and at the same time become more costly to produce. There will, therefore, be increasing need for atomic energy. As a scientific correspondent of the *Financial Times* puts it: "The arrival of the Atomic Age is, it would seem, only just in time."

Failing Coal Production

For British capitalism the problem shows itself in the failure of coal output to keep pace with demand. The post-war years have seen periodical dependence on imported coal, and coal exports from this country, which formerly bulked so large, have now fallen behind the value of exported petroleum products from the new huge refineries. Even if, with the investment of large sums in mining machinery and equipment—£450 million is to be invested in the next six years—the total quantity can be increased, productivity has fallen and therefore the real cost has risen. This is the result of many factors, but chiefly because the richer and more easily worked seams were the first to be exhausted.

This is apt to be overlooked because comparison is rarely made with the earlier periods when productivity, measured in annual output per worker in the mining industry, was at its peak. The *Daily Express* (5/7/54) made the point that in 1953 the "output per man in the mines was 295 tons" (almost exactly one ton per working day), and that this has only once been exceeded since the war. But though this output is also well above the low levels of some years between the wars, it is far below the peak of 333 tons of 1883 and the average of 319 tons in 1879-1883. (Report on the Coal Industry, 1925, Vol. I, Chapter XI.)

On the above figures the present annual output per worker is 8 per cent. below what it was seventy years ago, but the actual fall is really much greater than 8 per cent. because present output can only be maintained by the labour of increasing numbers of workers in the engineering industry engaged on the production of machinery for the mines.

For the present the Government is encouraging the use of oil in place of coal, as at the new Bankside power station, but at the same time atomic power is being developed for electricity generation. This is no doubt mainly for the technical reasons, but it will also not have escaped the notice of the Government that a subsidiary source of energy may also be useful to them in resisting wage demands of the miners.

Wages, Prices and Labour Government

This year, for the first time since June, 1947, the Ministry of Labour Index of average wage rates caught up with the Cost of Living Index, both now standing at 42 per cent. above 1947. In 1951, when the Labour Government left office, the Cost of Living Index at 129 was seven points higher than the wage index. In the main, the movements of prices depend on the workings of capitalism here and in the world generally and are not under the control of governments. The one important exception is currency manipulations, like the Labour Government's devaluation of the pound in 1949, which, as they well knew, was bound to raise the cost of living and leave wages lagging behind. The actual course of events certainly gives some support to the view that the Labour Government's preaching of "wage restraint" to the workers in 1947 onwards played its part in keeping wages below the rise of the cost of living.

Armaments for Peace

The plausible argument used by the advocates of armaments and still more armaments is that if the country is unarmed or armed less powerfully than some other country this encourages the stronger Powers to attack the weaker. The weaker should therefore get more armaments and so deter the potential aggressor.

One fallacy in the argument is, of course, that if they all increase their armaments by, say, 50 per cent. their relative position is just where it was at the start.

It will also be noticed that the more strongly armed Powers use an argument that is just as plausible and just as silly. Their generals demand more arms, not in order to catch up with somebody else, but in order to retain their lead. All the big Powers use this argument, among them Russia.

At the so-called elections in Russia earlier this year one of the Communist Party candidates (no other political parties are allowed to put forward candidates, or, indeed, to exist at all), was Marshal Bulganin, whose election speech was published in the Russian Embassy's *Soviet News*, under date 10th March, 1954.

In his speech he not only reiterated that the Russian army is already "the strongest in the world," but that it is urgently necessary to make it stronger still. "As we know, those who do not go forward, fall behind, and those who fall back are defeated. For this reason, since the victory won in the great Patriotic War, the Party and the Government have not relaxed their efforts to strengthen our defence capacities."

Needless to say, Bulganin, like his opposite numbers in all the other countries, insists that their massive equipment in artillery, tanks, atom bombs, hydrogen bombs, etc., etc., are merely to preserve peace!

of a myth. A good deal of everyday religious belief is mythology. So, too, is the middle-class belief, which usually takes the form not of "I believe in it" but of "I belong to it."

Like many myths, this one began as reality. There was a middle class, and it became the capitalist class. That is a different thing, however, from what they mean nowadays. The middle-class person sees himself as the genus of a flowery dell between the working-class cabbage patch and the upper-class orchid house. He regards himself as the type of most value to the community ("the backbone of the nation"); "the British way of life" is his way of life. The latter, incidentally, is true. Itself a myth, "the British way of life" is really the sum of the traditional desiderata for the middle class; semi-detached houses, cricket on the green, Old Boys' dinners and all the rest. A sketch—it would have to be an imaginative one—of a middle-class man would simply portray life in Britain as it is imagined by sympathetic foreigners, and a good many British, too.

The authors of books about the middle class always acknowledge the impossibility of defining it. It would seem like being in love—unexplainable, indefinable, but you know it when you're there—except that a classification needs to be based on reason to be valid. What, then, are the reasons for classifying people as middle class? Not income, because that would exclude the curates and the impoverished gentlefolk. On the other hand, not education, because that would rule out Alfred Doolittle and a good many local Aldermen.

Numbers of people consider themselves middle-class on the score of occupation. Probably most "black-coated" workers would say so if they were asked, on the grounds that they keep clean and are non-industrial. So is a lavatory attendant; and doctors and nurses have routine tasks which would be exceptionable to a self-respecting paperhanger. Then there are managers, but it is difficult to see them as anything other than well-paid employees. And, of course, the doctors, lawyers, teachers, clergy—in fact, professional people generally. Most of them come from comparatively well-off homes—almost a necessity for a long course of professional training. Their "middle-class" status is the cause, not the result, of their being in the professions.

Certainly the middle class are not only conscious but very jealous of the unfathomable dividing line between them and the working class. (The tea shoppe and the strangled vowel are its monuments.) Since the war middle-class people have complained continually of impoverishment, of being no better off than manual workers. Poverty can be a relative term. In a recent *Manchester Guardian* correspondence, people whose incomes range from two hundred and fifty to three thousand pounds a year told of their difficulties in making ends meet. Obviously there is a difference, and the people with large incomes are not poor in the sense that people with a fiver a week are; all the same, they are telling the truth. If you are the manager of a large firm, you have to live like the manager of a large firm. Recently a teacher wrote to one of the papers and complained that he could not afford a holiday. What he really meant was that he could not afford his sort of holiday, not a cheap week in a cheap guest house at a cheap resort.

Is there really a class of people, even a small one, that stands half-way between the working class and the capitalists? The simplest way to answer is to discover and place those two classes and then see what, if anything, is left. A capitalist is a person who lives by owning something of the means of production or distribution. If he has a small ownership and gets along only by working at it himself, then he isn't a capitalist because he is living by his labour and not by his ownership; a capitalist can live without working. A worker has no facilities for doing so, no ownership of the means of life. He has to sell his ability to work—brawn, brains, or whatever comprises it: the price is his wage, and he is wholly dependent on it.

There are no people in capitalist society whose living comes in any other way. Clerks, managers, teachers, parsons, dentists, lawyers—they are all dependent on their wages, salaries, stipends, fees, what they are paid for their labour-power. They work for their livings, have to find and hold jobs. They belong, in fact, to the working class.

There is no middle class. Our world is a two-class world of workers and capitalists. In the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the growing capitalist class was a middle class itself, a third element in the society where landowners ruled and tenants worked. The cloth manufacturers, the merchant adventurers and bankers, struggled to throw off the incubus of feudalism. The Civil war and the political revolution of the mid-seventeenth century were part of this struggle; it was expressed in Milton's prose as well as in the new economic doctrines. And when the manufacturers and the others became the ruling class, the existence of a middle class ended.

A large number of those who call themselves middle class are much better paid than most workers. It is worth considering why, because the reason will explain also why they are not sitting as pretty as might be expected. Labour-power is bought and sold in a market; it is a commodity, like boots or biscuits. Everything has its price, and the price is the expression in money of its value; there may be fluctuations because of supply and demand, but they are fluctuations round this point of value. And the value of any commodity—biscuits, boots or labour-power—is determined by the amount of labour that went to make it. That is why mass-produced boots are cheap and hand-made shoes are dear; it is also why a bank manager is well paid and a builder's labourer poorly paid.

Little training is needed to pull down ceilings, carry buckets and mix cement; no instructional books, no theoretical lectures. Nobody requires a builder's labourer to speak well, display refinement or know much (he would probably be thought to be putting on side if he did so). But a bank manager *does* need training and the other things. He must know banking, which is not a simple subject; he must speak well, organize well, and have a good deal of what is called "madam." His labour-power, in short, embodies a lot of labour from other sources, so its price is comparatively a high one.

That is not the whole story, however. The wages of these two have to maintain them, not as human beings, but as a labourer and a bank manager. The

(Continued on page 127)

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP.—Meets Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at Woodworker's Hall, Coupar's Alley, Wellgate. Correspondence to P. G. Cavanagh, 1b, Benvie Road, Dundee.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wednesdays 4th and 25th August, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

ROMFORD.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.) Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 35, Hunter Street, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets alternate Thursdays 12th and 26th August at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd. (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Fairview Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m., 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to I. G. Grisley, 47, Eastbourne Grove, West Cliff-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month 7-9.30 p.m., at Khavym, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visit is welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to D. Deutz, 21, Kenilworth Gardens, Seven Kings, Essex.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. St. Edmund's, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Fridays of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. No Meetings during August. September 9th and 23rd at 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. F. W. Simpkins, 18 Thurlough Road, Wandsworth Common, S.W.12.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea. **Fulham** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 69, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6 Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street. C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, August 9th and 23rd, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Farmer, 46, Fernie Street, Glasgow, N.W.

Hackney meets Mondays at 8 p.m. at the Co-op Hall, 197 Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Iveney 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 7-9 p.m., discussion after Branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. C. Rowan, 28, Redbourne Avenue, Finchley, N.3.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec., 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 10th and 24th August George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; sec. J. M. Breakey 2, Denison Ave., Winton. Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wallington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

SOCIALIST STANDARD



4^D

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

THE BIRTH OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY

In the early days of the Working Class Movement, when advocates of better conditions were treated as felons, there was some ground for engaging in secret societies and for defending internal deliberations from prying eyes. Towards the end of the Nineteenth Century the fetters upon revolutionary activity had been so considerably loosened in England, and the path to power opened by means of electoral action, that secrecy was no longer necessary and only became an obstacle to progress.

But the tradition of secrecy still persisted in the social democratic parties, and, along with the fetish of leadership, placed in the hands of small groups of leaders power to influence the policy of parties in the directions they wished. The result of this was that policy was decided by a few people in prominent positions. This had a retarding influence upon the growth of the workers understanding and upon the real progress of the working class movement. Those in the forefront of the movement felt that they were the nature-designed leaders of a great cause, and they were impatient to build up a large following, believing that this in itself would bring about the emancipation of the workers; the familiar picture of leaders selling out for pelf and place only existed in outline. Moreover, those who were at that time determining the policy of the movement in different directions were tied to reformist programmes; some of them denied the existence of the class struggle and saw in Socialism nothing more than the establishment of eternal principles of justice and morality.

Inside the Social Democratic Federation, the most advanced of the English radical parties, dissatisfaction with the reformist programmes and the temporary agreements with capitalist parties was growing and had already been responsible for an ill-fated breakaway led by William Morris, Belfort Bax, Frederick Lessner, and Marx's daughter Eleanor, at the end of the eighties. They had formed the Socialist League which had the blessing of Frederick Engels. Unfortunately the "League" went to the other extreme and abandoned parliamentary action, eventually coming under the control of anarchists.

During the early days of the present century a group of young people began to form which aimed at clarifying the position and transforming the Social Democratic Federation into a genuine Socialist organisation, free from the fetters of reformism. They made fierce protests against reformism, leadership, private agreements and political trading at meetings and conferences. Their efforts, however, were paralysed by the power, influences and secret arrangements of the official leaders, who dubbed the militant group "Impossibilists" on the ground that their proposals were unpractical, unsound, and would make the movement impotent.

About the same time the ideas of the American Socialist Labour Party, headed by a very able speaker and writer, Daniel de Leon, were making some headway amongst youthful radicals in England and Scotland in spite of the fact that this organisation was also crippled by a reformist bias and by a leaning towards industrial unionism.

In 1903 and 1904 the "Impossibilist" group made desperate efforts by "boring from within" tactics to head off the reformist policy of the leaders, but without success. The latter became so incensed at the attacks upon them that they finally arranged at a private meeting to deal with the opposition by persuading conference to give them power to expel those militants who would not toe the line laid down by the Executive. The militants refused to withdraw from the position they had taken up, in favour of revolutionary political action on the class struggle basis, and the expulsions by the Executive then commenced.

One section of the militants, in Scotland, had actually formed themselves into a section of the Socialist Labour Party in 1903; accepting all that was stultifying in S.L.P. policy. This secret action was not revealed by them to the rest of the militants until 1904. The other section held a meeting in London at which it was agreed that any further attempts to bring the Social Democratic Federation in line with a genuine class struggle policy would be fruitless, and the only alternative was to form a new political organisation.

At a meeting in London on June 12th, 1904, this new organisation was formed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain.

The new party was forced into existence without premises, a party journal, literature or funds. The members immediately set about framing a Declaration of Principles and a set of rules to guide them, and also collecting funds to publish a monthly journal.

In September, 1904, the first number of the new journal, the SOCIALIST STANDARD, appeared and the editorial column contained the following statement.

"In the past two bodies of men have put forward the claim to be Socialist parties, viz., the Independent Labour Party and the Social Democratic Federation. We who have for many years taken a share in the work of the latter organisation, and who have watched the progress of the former from its initiation, have been forced to the conclusion that through neither of them can the Social Revolution at which we aim be achieved, and that from neither of them can the working class secure redress from the ills they suffer."

This first number of the SOCIALIST STANDARD also contained the Object and Declaration of Principles that had been drawn up and agreed upon by the membership.

The last paragraph of the Principles, in particular,

was opposed to the practice of all the social democratic parties of the time, and yet the accuracy of this Principle should be obvious. There cannot be more than one Socialist party in any country because, if it is a genuine Socialist party, any other parties that are formed must increase the confusion in the minds of the workers and therefore retard the march to Socialism.

In spite of this obvious truth many, who claimed to be Socialists, were members of more than one organisation; some were members of the Fabian Society, the Independent Labour Party and the Social Democratic Federation, as well as, later, the Labour Party. It was their mutual adherence to reform policies that enabled members of these parties to do this without finding anything contradictory in their conduct. When the Socialist Party of Great Britain was formed its members were so conscious of this weakness that they declined to accept anybody to membership who belonged to any other political party and refused to permit its members to speak on any other political platform except in opposition.

OUR PRINCIPLES STAND

Just over a hundred years ago, Marx and Engels, commenting on the drastic changes brought about by the Capitalist system of production, stated in the Communist Manifesto:—

"The bourgeoisie during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground—what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?"

Since then this process has been continued at an ever increasing pace, with progressive acceleration during the past fifty years which staggers the imagination.

Even faster and more complex machinery, together with changes in technique, have brought the belt system and mass production, making the day's toil a nightmare.

Running parallel, but well to the fore, are the powers of destruction. One horror overshadows another. The high explosive and incendiary bombs of '39 are dwarfed by the Atom bomb of '45. Terrible as was the destructive power of this weapon, it has become insignificant compared with the Hydrogen bomb, making possible mass slaughter on an unpredictable scale.

Keeping pace with these abominations of destruction, and an accessory to them, is the speed of travel. Nothing is spared in human life and wealth in the mad scramble to outpace rivals in speed, an effort directed today pri-

Owing to the bitter experience of the undemocratic methods of the Social Democratic Federation the new party framed rules that gave the whole of the membership complete control of the organisation, and, in order that workers could be under no delusion about the aims and activities of the Party, all meetings, whether Branch Meetings, Executive Meetings, or Conferences, were open to the public; anyone was free to enter these meetings and listen to the discussions.

This was a revolutionary departure from custom and a severe blow to the cult of leadership, as well as eliminating any suspicion that the Party was engaged in any secret or conspiratorial activities. This policy of open meetings the Party has adhered to ever since.

Such were the circumstances that gave birth to the party that this year celebrates its fiftieth anniversary; fifty years of the consistent advocacy of Socialism without turning aside for anything.

GILMAC.

marily to the purpose of slaughter.

This mad world of ever more rapid changes has had its effect, among other things on the fortunes of political parties. Many that flourished fifty or less years ago are gone and almost forgotten. Others, while retaining their original names, have completely changed their character, while a few survivors are but shadows of their former selves.

The stable character of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and its consistent adherence to the principles of Socialism, stands out as an exceptional incident in the political life of this country. This fact is a fitting tribute to the ability of that small body of working men who founded the organisation and drew up its object and declaration of principles.

The clear understanding and unity of purpose which guided their action stands out in every clause of that statement. It draws a clear line of demarcation between the Socialist Party and all other political parties. It stamps the organisation as Marxist, and gives it its scientific basis. The fact that membership of the party has been conditional upon an understanding and agreement with that declaration, explains to a large extent its survival through conditions which have wrecked and destroyed so many others.

The declaration has proved invaluable as an instrument against opponents, and a sure guide in the settlement of many internal disputes. Time and time again, trained and skilled men in the art of debate, have

OUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

After fifty years of the Party's existence it is worth while drawing attention to the principal contributions the Party has made to the Socialist movement.

(1). We have always insisted upon the capture of political power before any fundamental change in the social system can be accomplished.

(2). Until the majority understood and want this change Socialism cannot be achieved.

(3). Opposition to all reform policies and unswerving pursuit of Socialism as the sole objective.

(4). Opposition to all war without any distinction between alleged wars of offence, of defence, or against tyranny.

(5). The understanding that taxation is a burden upon the capitalist class and not upon the working class, and therefore any schemes which are brought forward to cut down taxes are measures of interest to the capitalist class and not to the working class.

(6). That when the workers understand their position and how to change it they will not require leaders to guide them. Leadership is the bane of the working class movement for Socialism.

(7). That Socialism is international involving the participation of workers all over the world. Therefore any suggestion of establishing Socialism in one country alone is anti-socialist.

(8). In a given country there can only be one Socialist Party, therefore no member can belong to any other political party at the same time as he is a member of the Party.

(9). Likewise no member can speak on any other political platform except in opposition.

(10). The Socialist Party must be entirely independent of all other political parties entering into no agreement or alliances for any purpose. Compromising this independence for any purpose, however seemingly innocent, will lead to non-socialists giving support to the Party.

(11). We throw our platform open to any opponent to state his case in opposition to ours.

(12). Likewise all our Executive meetings, Branch meetings and Conferences are open to the public.

(13). The members have entire control of the Party and all members are on an equal footing.

(14). Finally the Party has a scrupulous regard for political honesty and no skeletons are permitted to moulder in cupboards.

E. L.

GILMAC.

THE IMPACT OF THE FIRST GREAT WAR

The 1914-1918 war had a disastrous effect upon the Party. On many Sunday mornings before the war broke out the Executive Committee had been meeting to read through and amend a pamphlet that had been drafted for publication. This had to be abandoned and the pamphlet was not considered again until a few years after the war ended. Another project that had to be abandoned was the appointment of a paid Secretary-Organiser. Money had been subscribed for this purpose, the member selected, the Executive Committee were discussing the date when he should start and the work he should start upon when the war put an end to the idea.

The war dealt its worst blow to the membership. The Military Service Act, which came into operation in March, 1916, applied immediately to a large body of active young members and, eventually, to nearly all the men in the Party. The Appeal Tribunals that were set up were quite useless, as far as members were concerned, and were treated by them largely as a means to put the Party's case where possible; generally, however, the objections of members only got a few minutes hearing. In order to escape the clutches of the authorities many members "disappeared" and some we never saw again; others went to prison.

Immediately the war broke out we drew up a Manifesto which was published in the September 1914 SOCIALIST STANDARD; the August number was already printed. This Manifesto is reprinted in our pamphlet on War. In the same September issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD an editorial article appeared setting out the real basis of the conflict and concluding with the following paragraph:—

"The question for the working class, then, is not that of British or German victory, since either event will leave them wage-slaves living upon wages. Under German rule those wages cannot be reduced lower than under British, for every British working man knows that the masters who are shouting so loudly today for us to go and die in defence of our shackles and their shekels, have left no stone unturned to force wages to the lowest possible limits. The question, then, before the workers, is the abolition of the whole social system of which war and unemployment are integral parts, and the establishment of society upon the basis of common ownership of the means of production—the establishment, that is, of Socialism."

The Executive Committee passed a resolution stating that any member who voluntarily joined the fighting forces was unfit for membership of a Socialist Party. This attitude the members loyally adhered to during the course of the war.

Outdoor speaking during the war was extremely difficult. There were many turbulent meetings. Some meetings were broken up and members had to defend the speaker and the platform. Speakers were arrested for "spreading disaffection amongst His Majesty's subjects." A speaker was arrested at Leicester and followed to the police station by a crowd howling for his blood. He was released, after a week, on giving an undertaking not to appear on the platform again for six months. When he got back to London he phoned his employers intending to give a plausible reason for his absence. He did not get that far. He was told his wages would be sent on and they never wanted to see him again. Later he learned that one of his fellow clerks had obligingly pinned up a report of his case in the manager's office.

One instance in particular reflected the attitude of the authorities towards our speakers. One of them got upon the platform and, before putting our case, said he would read to the audience Lord Roberts' Circular to Commanding Officers in India. Before he got half way through the circular the police intervened and took him off to the police station where he was charged with "spreading disaffection." When he came before the magistrate he protested that he had made no personal contribution at all; that he was arrested whilst in the middle of reading Lord Roberts' circular. The magistrate asked to see the circular and, after reading it, said "Well there is nothing wrong with the circular, but, read at a meeting in the present circumstances, it was likely to cause disaffection amongst His Majesty's subjects." He then warned the speaker not to repeat his crime and fined him £2 2s. . . . As a matter of interest the circular dealt in detail with the selection and care of native girls to act as prostitutes for the soldiers in India under official licence!

The difficulties of speaking increased so much that a Party meeting was called to decide whether it was worth while continuing. A majority decided that it was not. On the front page of January 1915 SOCIALIST STANDARD we informed readers of our decision to suspend outdoor propaganda and the reasons that forced us to this decision. The article, in large type, appeared under the heading "Under Martial Law."

So outdoor meetings were closed down but the columns of the S.S. continued to criticise all concerned in the war and to put the Socialist attitude on the war. Every issue was full of statements that came under the Regula-

tions and members were expecting the Head Office to be raided and the Party compulsorily closed down. In October 1916 the War Office informed us that the S.S. was prohibited from being sent outside the United Kingdom on the ground that a portion of its contents "might be used by the enemy powers for their propaganda." In 1917 the Head Office was raided by the police but there was nothing left there to interest them; all Party records had been deposited elsewhere and the General Secretary at the time, Hilda Kohn, carried the current minute book around in her bag.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Its impact on the Socialist Movement

When the Russian Revolution broke upon war-weary Europe in 1917 most of the present members of the Socialist Party of Great Britain were either unborn or very young. To most of us the Russian Revolution is past history, as indeed it is to most people living to-day.

Whilst a knowledge of events relatively so recent is easy to acquire, the emotional impact of those events on politically-minded working men and women in this country, reformist and self-styled revolutionary alike, is harder to recapture. The fervour aroused by this impact even seeped into the S.P.G.B. Growing up into manhood in the years following the first world war, it is difficult for any young politically-interested worker, unbriefed in Socialist theory, to escape the influence of the emotionalism and the fervour which clouded opinion on the happenings in Russia. The Socialist revolution had started in Russia and would sweep through Europe! The workers would rise (at the psychological moment), form their own councils (Soviets) and take over the land, the mines and the factories. Parliament had been shown by the events in Russia to be "useless"—a "gas house." Every strike was interpreted by the new, self-appointed, Bolshevik theorists in this country as a move in the strategy of the coming struggle for Socialism. Those who seemed quite unaware of this development were the workers generally, though the English Bolsheviks seemed not to notice the fact.

One result of the Russian Revolution was the formation of the British Communist Party in 1920. The Socialist Labour Party, an organisation formed in 1903 and allegedly Marxist, split and some of its prominent members became leaders of the new organisation, which devoted itself to preparing for the "psychological moment." So seriously did it take this mumbo-jumbo that at one time in the late twenties Communists wrote to the S.P.G.B. declining a challenge to debate on the grounds that there was not time to debate Socialism—"it was round the corner." Others who joined the early Commu-

During the war the funds of the Party got very low and an urgent call for donations brought in very little. But the members who were left managed to hold out until the end, although we had to give up our premises in 1918 and move to a couple of rooms on the first floor of a house behind Oxford Street.

When the war ended members began to drift back and the job of rebuilding the Party was commenced with enthusiasm and success.

GILMAC.

nist Party came from the I.L.P. and the Labour Party, it being possible at that time to be a member of each party at one and the same time, the assumption being that the different branches of the "working class movement" were moving towards the same goal even if "tactics" differed. Even one or two members of the S.P.G.B. found their way into the Communist Party.

As a political party, however, the Socialist Party remained unshaken in its basic attitudes by the events in Russia. It would be an understatement to say that the Socialist Party shewed a disinclination to identify itself with the "working-class movement" on Russian questions. Whilst not unmoved by the events in Russia we rejected what Communists claimed were the lessons to be applied from it to England. We saw nothing in the Russian upheaval which would make it necessary for the Party to deviate from the course it has set itself at its foundation in 1904. We rejected the propositions that a Socialist revolution had taken place in Russia, that the working class had come to power, that "intellectual minorities" could "lead" an unprepared working class to Socialism, that Parliament was "useless" and that Russia had forged new instruments for working class emancipation. We expressed our views forcefully and objectively on these issues which resulted in bitter opposition from our opponents, as the SOCIALIST STANDARD and propagandists of twenty and more years ago testify. Our attitude on the Russian question is unchanged to-day and there is nothing that was written by our comrades in 1918 about it that we would withdraw. In contrast, prominent members of the Labour Party, who, whilst making pious reservations about the "violent methods" of the Bolsheviks in the early years, expressed approval of their aims and thought Russia was Socialist; but to-day see Russia as an empire-building, police state. It is an odd thought what the next thirty years might bring when one reflects that early Communist M.P.s like Newbold and Saklatvala owed their seats in Parliament to the fact that

they were candidates of the Labour Party whilst at the same time being members of the Communist Party. Time and events have brought changes of attitudes among erstwhile supporters of the Bolsheviks. Having little or no theoretical knowledge, support, idolatry and tolerance have given way to criticism and bitter opposition. The Socialist Party of Great Britain opposed the basic assumptions of the Bolsheviks and their English supporters as unsound and non-Marxist, and the consequent development of affairs in Russia since the Revolution has occasioned us no surprise.

Without reservation the Socialist Party refuted the claim that the Bolsheviks could introduce Socialism in Russia. We were critical of their aims and methods. Socialism was impossible before large scale, industrial production had developed, and with it also, a dispossessed working class population had been formed and won over to Socialism. The position in Russia was that it was a country largely populated by a peasantry, dominated by a semi-feudal aristocracy. Capitalist production was small in relation to the economy as a whole. Politically, the land-owning aristocracy were dominant and in control, the capitalist class were weak and insignificant, the working class was relatively numerically small though its organisations were semi-insurrectionary, vigorous and well organised. Parliamentary government in the Duma was a facade and creaked under the burden of aristocratic privilege and power: the franchise made a mockery of democracy.

Unable to deal with the complex problems thrown up by the war, the Russian Imperial Government, in 1917, began to lose authority and prestige. Lack of transport, food and arms, led to seething discontent among the soldiers, workers and peasants. It was in these circumstances that the Soviets (loosely organised councils or committees) established themselves among the workers, the soldiers and the peasants. The weaker and the more incompetent the Government were to control the situation the stronger the Soviets became and the more authority they assumed. The tottering Imperial government gave way in March, 1917, to the Kerensky regime. Kerensky was leader of the Mensheviks, who were, like the Bolsheviks, a section of the Social Democratic Party. The Kerensky regime lasted until November, 1917. Its failure resulted from its complete inability to assess the widespread discontent with the war among the soldiers, workers and peasants. Where the Mensheviks failed the Bolsheviks succeeded. They realistically exploited these discontents in the meetings of the Soviets. As the authority of the new regime declined so the Bolsheviks gained in popularity in the Soviets and the prestige of the Soviets grew. There were instances of some constitutional powers passing from the government to the Soviets. The slogan of the Bolsheviks became "All Power to the Soviets" and "Peace, Land and Bread." They crystallised the discontents and spread rapidly throughout Russia. The Kerensky regime, following its corrupt predecessor, came to its end.

The Bolsheviks had come to power in Russia. The Soviets, despite their spontaneous and improvised character had assumed constitutional forms and power. Amid all the excitements and the interest in the Russian Revolution aroused outside Russia the S.P.G.B. remained calm. From the outset it knew it could repudiate the wild claims that were being made. Whatever the merit of the slogan and

object of "Peace, Land and Bread," we said, this was not Socialism, and that, in the absence of knowledge and understanding among the majority of the population, could not lead to it. Further, we argued, this knowledge and understanding could not arise in the absence of maturity in productive relations and social development. Any government which assumed power in such circumstances, whether it claimed to be Socialist or not, must make itself responsible for the problems of capitalism and bring upon itself the opposition of the workers—they must fail. We were right.

In 1917 the Bolsheviks kept an earlier promise in arranging for free elections to a Constituent Assembly. When the result of the elections showed a majority opposed to the Bolsheviks, the government of the latter, which controlled the armed forces through the Soviets, decisively suppressed it. That was one of its first openly terroristic acts. It was certainly not the last. What idealism, principles or Socialist ideas might have existed in the pre-1917 Bolshevik movement in Russia, soon became lost in the evolution of the autocratic tyranny that soon established itself and remains firmly in the saddle to-day.

If there are lessons to be learned from Russia and other parts of the world where capitalism is administered in the name of Socialism and by men who sprang from the workers it is that the only way to Socialism is through working class understanding and democracy.

H. W.

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WORDS, WORDS, WORDS . . .

"I am told that people say I bawl. Well, I allow it, I do bawl and I will bawl." So said a famous tub-thumper of two hundred years ago, and in various tones, for various causes, they—we—have been bawling ever since.

Rhetoric under the sky is the oldest, most powerful form of persuasion. It was done in the agora, the market place that was the centre of social and political life in a Greek city. Petronius heckled an orator in Nero's Rome—"by a set of dribbling witticisms you found you could make audiences titter"—on his way to the bawdyhouse. In mediæval England John Ball stood on hillsides demanding freedom and justice for the poor. In Shakespeare's day news, scandal and sedition were put into ballads and sung in the markets, and old Saint Paul's was "the market of young lecturers, whom you may cheapen here at all rates and sizes"; Mark Antony—and his audience—had their prototypes. Through the centuries that followed, in the squares and open spaces they cried salvation and the rights of man—the revivalists, the Chartists and the rest.

The Socialist Party was founded when open-air meetings had never been more copious, when the sects and parties vied with one another in the streets for the attention of the working class. Different conditions engender different approaches. There was more rhetoric in those days—to the modern mind more "ham" perhaps, but it was necessary. The slick, confidence-making political speech belonged to the wireless-telegraph future. Aspiring speakers, practising declamation, tried "The Charge of the Light Brigade", "Men of England" and "The Bells" on one another.

Politically conscious people were more theory-conscious than they are to-day. Marx and Engels were not long dead, Kautsky, Luxemburg and Plechanov in their prime; Bernstein's revisionism and the Fabian Essays were argued fiercely. Socialist speakers had to know their theory and know it well. Many of them learned by heart what were considered key passages of important works: sections of *The Communist Manifesto*, the statement of historical materialism from *The Critique of Political Economy*, pages of *Capital*, of Darwin, Spencer and *No Compromise*, and bits of Shakespeare too. It was a fine thing to support the analysis of capitalism with

"... You take my life

When you do take the means whereby I live."

If the politicians were more learned, the others made up for it. A speaker too vigorous in attacking the prejudices of a prejudiced audience was asking to be thrown in a horse-trough, and not uncommonly he was. Robert

Tressell describes the reception of a "Clarion" van by the ragged-trousered philanthropists of Hastings:

"The man on the platform was still trying to make himself heard, but without success. The strangers who had come with the van and the little group of local socialists, who had forced their way close to the platform in front of the would-be speaker, only increased the din by their shouts of appealing to the crowd to 'give the man a fair chance.' This little bodyguard closed round the van as it began to move slowly downhill, but it was completely outnumbered. . . 'We'll give the swines Socialism!' shouted Crass, who was literally foaming at the mouth."

On most platforms, feeling carried the day. The Liberals and Tories could raise cheers with reference to the Empire and the Flag; the worst accusation against a policy was "it will ruin the country". Emotion was not altogether disfavoured by Socialists. Words like "traitor" carried a great deal; labour leaders were invariably called "Labour bleeders" or "fakirs", and there was even a Party song called "The World for the Workers".

The platform manner changed after the first war, at the same time as urban growth and road traffic began to eliminate meeting-places. The radio and the pictures arrived, and speakers had to compete with them. Some of the smaller parties were swallowed by the Labour and Communist Parties, so that theoretical argument gave place to "practical policies" and calls for "action now." In the 'thirties a new sort of political meeting appeared, with the speaker surrounded by microphones and no questions allowed. The rhetorical tradition of Parliament, too, suffered a blow when Labour came to power with Cabinet Ministers who were without oral grace; Gladstone, Balfour and their contemporaries could often be taken down verbatim to read as excellent prose.

Today audiences are more tolerant (and more knowledgeable too) and speakers, on the whole, more urbane and more discursive. Perhaps there are more wisecracks and fewer long quotations, because our age prefers the former as a condiment to learning. One tradition which the Party has always maintained is that of giving the platform to opposition. Other parties don't do it; the Socialist Party, which has everything to gain and nothing to fear from open discussion, never refuses, and many a truculent opponent has deflated himself trying to present a case against Socialism under the Socialist Party's own auspices.

The industriousness of Party speakers has always been remarkable. Before the first war, two dozen of them held something like a hundred and thirty open-air meetings a month in London alone. The numbers were similar in 1939, and today the meetings still are a vital part of the Party's propaganda. Debates, too: Liberals, Labour,

Tories, Communists, pacifists, fascists, parsons, anarchists—all of them have had their petty panaceas atomized by Socialist speakers. Several debates were published as pamphlets, and they are remarkable examples of the Party's case in action.

Fifty years' speaking for Socialism—fifty years of writing for it, as well. The SOCIALIST STANDARD is unique. It has never known a paid journalist; its writers and editors have been bricklayers, clerks, housewives, busmen—all sorts and conditions of working people in their spare time. The first page of the first issue said:

"In the Socialist Party of Great Britain we are all members of the working class, and cannot hope that our articles will always be finely phrased, but we shall endeavour to lay before you on every occasion a sane and sound pronouncement on all matters affecting the welfare of the working class. What we lack in refinement of style we shall make good by the depth of our sincerity and by the truth of our principles."

The STANDARD was too hard-hitting to have much refinement, and there was little room for fine phrases in Fitzgerald's relentless logic or the rumbustious onslaughts of Jacob. Euphemism was scorned, and the contributors said just what they meant. When the *Manchester Guardian* slighted the Party, a STANDARD headline called it the "Liberal skunk press"; Lloyd George was a liar, Asquith an assassin, and their confreres hypocrites, frauds and political prostitutes. It seems surprising that the Party was sued for libel only once.

The style of the STANDARD then, as now, owed to two principal sources: the sociological textbooks of the time, and popular journalism. From the latter it drew a peculiar Joe Miller waggishness that was part of the stock-in-trade of successful newspaper columnists, easier to exemplify than describe. Thus, the Editorial Committee apologizing for a writer who had not made himself clear to a correspondent: "He developed what he calls his style by studying a burr-walnut piano case in foggy weather". A debate with a suffragette was irresistible, and its report was resplendent with quips about "ye gallant knight Anderson" and "the poor girl". Perhaps the acme of this sort of wit was with a highly dramatic poem which had the refrain:

"Go! reckon your dead by your forged red,
And in factories where we spin;
If blood be the price of your cursed wealth,
By Christ! we have paid in full".

The poem was called "Gawd Struth We Have."

The writers on economics, socialist theory and political issues put forth their subject-matter lucidly and without frills or ambiguities; style which came naturally through close acquaintance with Engels, Kautsky, Plechanov and the other classical exponents of Marxism. The popularization of academic and technical subjects influenced later writers, and is still doing so—"science for the citizen" has made its mark. Just as on the platform, the people addressed are more widely informed and less concerned with theoretical questions. That does not mean, however, that the modern writer—or speaker—may neglect theory; it means that he must apply it more widely in a world with wider horizons.

And so it goes on; the business of persuading people to think straight, because that is what the Socialist wants. Words are our weapons. Words, words, words...

R. COSTER.

8

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

Even in those far-off days Paddington was a very active branch. They had amongst them five official speakers, two chairmen, two members of the E.C.—one of whom edited the S.S. for a time—and two writers. And—there was a choir. About ten musically minded members used to foregather at a member's house before Branch Meeting and blend their voices in what it was hoped was harmony. It was, in any case, very enjoyable. One Christmas Eve it was suggested we go carol singing for Party funds. A carol is defined as a religious song in praise of Christmas; but the dictionary also says that to carol is to warble. So we went warbling. In view of our object, where better we reasoned than bourgeois Bayswater!

It was a beautiful evening, as like as could be, one of the more popular Christmas cards; keen, bright, a powdering of snow but dry underfoot and a pale moon overhead. Sedate Bayswater was very peaceful, and it was with an almost guilty feeling we shattered the silence with "Hail Smiling Morn." Further items from our repertoire followed and presently a butler emerged to bestow upon our efforts his blessing and a shilling. Another pitch drew blank, but a few further successes encouraged us to keep going. Then came the reveller. A hansom cab drew up and discharged—discharged is the word—a festive figure complete with tall hat, opera-cloak, a roll of music and a load of alcohol. He insisted on beating time with his music roll to the strains of "Brightly Dawns our Wedding-day," and to "Comrades-in-Arms." "Hail Smiling Morn" incited him to dance, but alcohol did not aid his agility, and after degenerating into an elephantine shuffle, he bestowed upon us his blessing and half-a-crown. A further half-crown—quite a sum in those days—came from a window, thrown to us by a smiling housemaid. After that a financial famine seemed to set in and a friendly butler explained to us that Bayswater was empty except for servants; all the families had gone to the country for Christmas. We should have guessed it. However, we enjoyed the experience and Party funds benefited—if memory serves—by about 12/6.

W. T. H.

A. KOHN



Kohn became interested in politics when very young, taking part in discussions at Marble Arch, Hyde Park, when only a youth. In 1908 he joined the Party and was soon very active as a writer and speaker; he spoke on the outdoor platform nearly every evening for some years.

Soon after joining the party he started a private book agency and was the principal means of bringing English translations of foreign Socialist classics to many of us at a time when they were little known in England.

Practically all his life Socialism and books were his main interests. He read voraciously and few had his knowledge of books, past and present, on different aspects of the working-class movement. He was a forceful and humorous speaker, both indoor and outdoor, and early in the 1914 war he had some rowdy meetings. At one of his meetings in 1914 at Marble Arch the crowd rushed the platform, after a hectic meeting, and the police had to escort him through an angry crowd of "patriots" and across the road to the tube station.

During 1915, when the passing of the Conscription Act became certain, Kohn left for America, where he remained for about six years and made many friends in Canada and the U.S.A. While out there he wrote and spoke on Socialism and also organised classes. He sent articles to the SOCIALIST STANDARD from America, and the last one, in 1917, was picked up by the American authorities, who took exception to its anti-war contents and made considerable efforts to trace him. They also pressed the English authorities for assistance, and the latter called Fitzgerald up for questioning and kept him in a cell for a night. They also had his sister along at Scotland Yard for interrogation. However, they never traced Kohn and the matter was eventually dropped.

Arising out of the above police investigation there

were two humorous incidents, which it seems to the present writer are worth recording. Fitzgerald was very methodical and also extremely critical of members whose "stupidity" helped the authorities to collect members whose military position was doubtful. When Fitzgerald was arrested and searched the police found in his pocket his address book, which contained the addresses of most of us! The other incident concerned Kohn's sister. Although she was secretary of the Party at the time, the police failed to discover that she was even a member of the Party.

Kohn was on the Executive Committee and the Editorial Committee before 1914, and he was again on the Editorial Committee from 1924 to 1929. He wrote many excellent articles for the SOCIALIST STANDARD and was by nature very lively, full of jokes, and fond of company. Even when he was dying, humour still stirred in him.

A little while before the second world war his health broke down, and in 1940 he had to go into hospital for treatment. While there the hospital was hit by a bomb, and a few weeks later the room where he lodged was badly blasted. After a couple of years out of hospital, T.B. developed, and early in 1944 he was back in hospital again, where he remained until his death on the 28th December, 1944. He was twice evacuated on account of the hospital being hit by flying bombs, finally reaching the temporary hospital quarters in a large house in North Wales where he died at the age of 56.

Kohn's brain was crammed with knowledge of the international working-class movement, and he was intellectually generous to members and sympathisers—always ready to answer a question or explain a point. He gave almost the whole of his life to the struggle for Socialism.

GILMAC.

9

THE GENERAL STRIKE

The year 1926 was a most momentous one in working class history. It was the year of the greatest battle ever fought by the British trade union movement—the general strike.

The great world war of 1914-1918 created a vacuum in the world's markets and during the trade boom that followed British workers were able to wring a few concessions from their employers. As markets again became saturated with goods and trade declined, the tables were turned and the employers launched an attack to reduce wages and depress conditions of work.

The reparation terms imposed upon Germany after the war caused German coal to be diverted to markets that had previously been the prerogative of British coal traders. This aggravated the slump in the British coal industry and the wages and working hours of coal miners became the prime target when the employers took the offensive. In 1925, when their wages were already reduced to miserable limits, the miners were threatened with a further wage reduction, extension of their hours of work and the break-up of their national negotiating machinery.

The Miners' Federation of Great Britain rejected the employers' demands and received the support of the Trade Union Congress General Council which arranged with the railway and transport unions for united action. The employers, lined up behind the Government, were unprepared for such action and beat a hasty retreat. The day the coal owners withdrew their demands passed into history as Red Friday.

The trade unions were jubilant but the employers and the Government set to work making detailed preparations for the show-down that they intended to bring about. A few trade unionists, like Mr. A. J. Cook, the Miners' Secretary, realised that only the first round had been fought and they called for preparations for the next struggle, but nothing was done.

Meanwhile, an Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies (O.M.S.) was set up under the control of a number of military and naval commanders and prominent capitalists, whilst the Government stalled off the trade unions with a Royal Commission, under the chairmanship of Sir Herbert Samuel, to inquire into the coal industry.

When the Samuel Report was issued in March, 1926, it was specific only in its assertions that the miners should accept lower pay and longer hours. Some members of the General Council of the T.U.C. argued that the miners should accept the terms of the Commission's report pending a reorganisation of the coal industry that the report recommended, but the miners adopted a slogan, "Not a penny off the pay, not a second on the day."

10

The General Council of the T.U.C. entered into negotiations with the Government, trying by all means, even "almost grovelling" as Mr. J. H. Thomas, of the National Union of Railwaymen admitted, to find a way to divert the head-on crash that was ahead. Finally, Mr. Baldwin the Prime Minister, turned his back on the workers' leaders and refused further negotiations on the grounds that a general strike was threatened and that certain overt acts had already taken place, including gross interference with the freedom of the Press. This referred to the action of certain printers who had refused to print some anti-working class statements. The fight was on.

On Friday, April 30th, the King signed a Proclamation declaring a State of Emergency. Orders in Council were issued in the form of Emergency Regulations under the Emergency Powers Act. Local Authorities were reminded by a Ministry circular of the measures that had been previously arranged to cope with a national stoppage. Troops were moved to South Wales, Lancashire and Scotland and arrangements made to call in the Navy. The O.M.S. placarded the country with a poster calling for recruits.

On the third of May the General Council of the T.U.C. issued a manifesto and the following day the General Strike commenced. The stoppage exceeded expectations. All workers called upon responded magnificently, as did many who were not called upon. There were no evening papers and no passenger trains. All army leave was cancelled and the Government took over the B.B.C.

At midnight the taxi drivers came out and the next day saw seamen, transport workers, printers, journalists, engineers, dockers and many others all solidly on strike. The Government took over the *Morning Post* and issued the official *British Gazette* under the editorship of Mr. Churchill, whilst the T.U.C. took over the *Daily Herald* and published *The British Worker*.

By the third day of the strike 82 unions were involved and, considering the lack of preliminary preparation, the workers' organisation was splendid. Each succeeding day more and more workers joined the strike and the Government took further action including the formation of a "Civil Constabulary Reserve," composed of ex-soldiers with wages higher than those paid to miners. On the eighth day the High Court of Justice declared the strike illegal. The Government prepared to confiscate money sent by overseas trade unions to help their striking colleagues in Britain. The B.B.C. announced "There is as yet little sign of a collapse of the strike." There was no rowdyism, and clashes with the police and other authori-

ties were of a minor nature.

At midday on the ninth day the General Council of the T.U.C. arrived at Downing Street and informed the Prime Minister that the General Strike was being terminated that day and the news was broadcast at 1 p.m. followed by the publication of an order by the General Council for a cessation of the strike. Sir Herbert Samuel had issued a personal unauthoritative memorandum to the members of the council and they had seized upon it as an excuse to call off the strike. The miners were left to carry on an heroic struggle on their own till they succumbed in December, not even having been notified of the intending surrender.

Throughout the strike the General Council closed its eyes to the class conflict in which it was involved and insisted that the issue was purely an industrial one. Not so the Government. It realised clearly the class character of its own acts and called for support from the un-class conscious by addressing them as "the nation" and telling them that Parliament and the constitution were threatened.

The Labour Party acted and spoke similarly to the General Council of the T.U.C. It blamed the Government but did not want to see the Government defeated. Hypocritically, it said that had it been in office it would have avoided such a situation, conveniently forgetting that only two years earlier it had been prepared to evoke the Emergency Powers Act in similar circumstances when it was faced with a transport strike.

The Communists went wild and were responsible for many of the clashes with the police. They cried that Parliament was finished and demanded all power to the General Council. They saw a revolution every time a lorry was overturned or a policeman lost his helmet. After the strike they laid the blame for the capitulation to the cowardice of the members of the General Council and demanded the replacement of the cowards.

It is not easy to analyse an event immediately it has taken place, yet, such is the nature of Socialist analysis, that we would not amend one paragraph, alter one sentence or delete one word of what the Socialist Party of Great Britain said about the General Strike at the time. The twenty-eight years that have elapsed have only served to confirm what our comrades of those days wrote in the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

The two outstanding lessons of the General Strike were, firstly, that while political power is in the hands of the capitalist class, and until such time as the workers take it into their own hands, they must expect defeat in industrial struggles that threaten the interests of the whole capitalist class. Secondly, the evils of leadership. To blame the General Council or call them cowards and traitors solves nothing. To replace them by other leaders is merely to invite continuous repetitions of similar debacles. To be free of cowards, traitors, hypocrites, fakirs, and even well intentioned mis-leaders, the workers must see to it that their representatives are their servants, not their masters, carrying out instructions, not giving them.

When the workers are prepared to put as much effort and heroism into the struggle for Socialism as they were prepared to devote in support of the striking miners in 1926, there will be a grand story to tell.

W. WATERS.

OUR MANY HEAD OFFICES

Our Party has had a number of Head Offices in the course of its career. Until recently most of them have been fair reflections of our slender funds.

Our first Head Office was little more than an address: The Communist Club, 107, Charlotte Street, W.1. Then in 1905 we rented a room for certain evenings at 1A, Caledonian Road, King's Cross Road. Here the Executive Committee used to meet on alternate Saturdays and Thursdays. Then in 1906 we rented a room at 28, Cursitor Street, where, for the first time the Executive Committee met every Tuesday evening. After some trouble with the landlord we took a room at 22, Great James Street, just off Theobalds Road, in 1907.

In 1909 we began really to move upward. We got two rooms on the first floor of a house in 10, Sandland Street, Bedford Row (a little behind the north side of Holborn). This was the first Head Office visited by the present writer. When he went there as a youth he felt he had really reached the heart of deep red revolution. The ground floor was an old dilapidated junk shop. The side door led up two flights of dark rickety stairs to a couple of bare rooms. The floor was bare boards. One room contained an old desk for the use of the General Secretary and anyone else who had writing to do. Beside was piled the stock of unsold STANDARDS. As time passed the pile grew far beyond the height of the desk until it was in danger of being knocked down by anyone passing. The other room contained a long table and some chairs. This room was used for economics classes on Thursday evenings and for folding STANDARDS on Saturdays. On Tuesday evenings the table was moved into the secretarial room for the E.C. meetings. When the E.C. was sitting it was almost impossible to get anyone else into the room, in spite of the fact that we advertised and boasted that our E.C. meetings were open to the public—so they were, if you could get in!

While we were at Sandland Street the General Secretary, Sammy Quelch, had a coffee shop nearby, and he had a habit of pinning a note on the door asking any members who called to go round to the coffee shop. Robert Blatchford had a humorous dig at the Party in his paper

11

The Clarion (the most popular Labour paper of its day) at the time. He said he "called at the Headquarters of the Socialist Party of Great Britain but found that the Party had gone to get a cup of coffee." Later this was changed to "The Secretary, the Treasurer, and the member had gone to get a cup of coffee."

The old junk shop was bombed during the last war and it and the adjoining houses completely obliterated. But the fire, passion and enthusiasm of the members that gathered in those two bleak rooms above the shop still lingers in the memory. There was a tough old member without arms (he had lost them in an accident in Africa) who used to sell boot laces and matches and would come in breathless and dripping with rain to tell of a meeting that was being held so that members could hurry there with literature to sell. He was one of the best literature sellers the Party had and was active for many years. Later on he surmounted his difficulties sufficiently to earn a comfortable living. His name was Germain.

Head Office was moved from Sandland Street to 193, Grays Inn Road in 1912. There we had two ground floor rooms and a basement in which, for the first time, the literature was put into proper order. One of the members, T. W. Lobb, made curved seats that ran round the walls of the front room. This room was large enough for the E.C. to sit round the table on chairs whilst visitors could sit along the walls.

Next door was a rather poor coffee shop but the owner had a sympathy for us and helped us in many ways, particularly during the first Great War. Every Saturday he would come in with cloths and a pail of water and clean the windows. When the police were waiting to raid us he gave the secretary word of the two men he saw watching our place and enabled her to direct E.C. members into his shop to decide what to do about holding their meetings.

The first war broke out whilst we were at Grays Inn Road, and it was there that the War Manifesto was prepared and members met to decide upon the course of action to meet the various difficulties arising out of that calamitous event. The times were certainly stirring as the pages of the SOCIALIST STANDARD during those devastating years will reveal.

During the six years we were at Grays Inn Road a great deal of work was done. Before the war preparations were completed for putting a paid Organising Secretary into the field; economics and other classes and discussions were held regularly; members would meet to decide about making visits to outlying places to hold impromptu meetings; and a host of other plans were made and accomplished. Someone managed to buy an old printing machine on which leaflets, E.C. reports and treasurer's reports were printed. Comrade Alley, who recently passed away, used to set them up in type and leave a note for members to run them off—very laboriously by swinging a long arm across.

In 1918 we were forced to leave Grays Inn Road and we took two rooms on the first floor of a house at 28, Union Street, W.1, just behind Oxford Street. There again the people in the shop below were sympathetic. It was a sweet shop and if any dubious caller made an appearance or there was any urgent message one of the price-cards in the window would be turned upside-down. The General Secretary at that time occupied the floor above

Head Office.

These rooms were only a temporary refuge. The next year, 1919, we got premises at 17, Mount Pleasant, opposite the G.P.O. Sorting Office. We had two floors and a fair-sized basement. It was the most "respectable" Head Office we had had up to that time, and we remained there eight years. It was to this office that many wandering members returned after the war. One night, soon after we had taken up occupation, a powerful voice outside roared a greeting to a member and then Moses Baritz walked in. He was back after being released from prison in America where he had been interned for his anti-war activities. When he went out to America during the war his hair was coal black; when he returned it was snow-white. Prison had been torment to a man of his nervous energy.

Several Australian seamen visited us at this office in the Twenties. Some of them later took part in forming our companion party in Australia. We also had visitors from America who helped to form our companion party in the United States.

In 1927 Fitzgerald, with the aid of map and compass, succeeded in proving to a majority of the E.C. members that the Elephant and Castle was really in the centre of London. Anyhow we moved over near there to 42, Great Dover Street. We took an old house with three floors and a basement. One of the members made fittings for keeping the S.S. and literature in proper order in one basement room. The other basement room (a very small one) had tables and chairs, and a stove on which a woman member cooked for those who wanted a meal. The smoke and heat in the little place was stifling, and getting out when one had finished was a problem.

The ground floor front room was used for selling literature and packing. There was a small shop front in which literature was displayed. The first floor consisted of one good sized room in which meetings were held as well as an occasional social—when the place shook as if it was about to collapse. E.C. meetings were also held in this room. Here we had some interesting discussions on the Spanish Revolt and at the beginning of the last war. In the room above lectures were given on many subjects during the winter months.

In April 1941 a bomb fell on this house destroying most of our stuff and we had to get temporary premises at 33, Gloucester Place, which consisted of two ground floor rooms. In April, 1943, we took over Rugby Chambers, Rugby Street, just off Theobalds Road. These premises had been occupied by the Electrical Trades Union. It was from here that we ran our first Parliamentary candidate in 1945. It was also while we were here that the Party membership began to expand and the funds to reach reasonable proportions. With greater activity, the need for more space and increasing rent the members looked round for more suitable premises. A fund was started and sufficient money donated by members and friends to enable us to buy our present premises at 52, Clapham High Street, which we took over in March, 1951. Here at last we have a place of our own, with a small hall for meetings, and suitable accommodation for the secretary, committee, a library, a canteen, and a room in which members can meet and discuss.

After many ups and downs it looks as if we have reached a settled place at last.

GILMAC.

OUR ELECTORAL ACTIVITIES

The Socialist Party, owing to lack of means, are unable to put up candidates this election, but every voter who adheres to Socialist principles, may vote for Socialism by writing the word Socialism across his or her ballot paper as shown above. To do this is to register a demand for a Socialist candidate.

LIBERAL INCLUDING LABOUR	
TORY	
COALITION	
UNIONIST	
LABOUR INCLUDING LIBERAL	

Socialism

VOTE THUS

(Reproduced from front page of SOCIALIST STANDARD December, 1918.)

One of my cherished papers is an Election Manifesto dated the first of November 1906 entitled Battersea Borough Council Election, Latchmere Ward; underneath this title are the words, Battersea Branch of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, followed by the object of the Party, and at the bottom of the front page, the words Socialist candidates' Election Address. Inside is an article, addressed to the Electors of Latchmere Ward, which explained the struggle for political supremacy, the necessity for class organisation, and exposed Municipalism (a now forgotten issue). The bogey of the rates was dealt with, the article ending as follows: "The Socialist Party of Great Britain therefore enters into municipal contests as a step in the work of capturing the whole of the political machinery. Fully realising and pointing out to workers the strict limitations of the power of local bodies, making no promises that are beyond our power to fulfil, we ask the members of our class, when (but not before) they have studied these facts, and realise their correctness, to cast their vote for the candidates of the S.P.G.B., who alone stand on the above basis".

Finally appear the candidates names, George Frederick Moody, Frank Craske, George Money.

This was the first Election Manifesto issued by the Party, and is a reprint from the front page article in the October 1906 issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

It was also used in the other Wards, at Battersea, and the Tooting Ward of Wandsworth.

There were twelve candidates put forward, at the 1906 municipal Elections, nine in Battersea and three in Wandsworth. The Battersea results were Latchmere Ward, Craske 117, Moody 117, Money 113. Winstanley Ward, Blewett 57, Roe 49, Witcher 45. Church Ward, Greenham 93, Fawcett 88, Hunt 77 (incidentally Comrade Roe is still with us, and was a delegate for his branch at the 1954 Conference). At Wandsworth Tooting Ward, it was Barker 94, MacManus 77, Dumenil 59; of these votes fifty were for our candidates alone.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD for December 1906 commented:—"All the candidates fought on the Election Manifesto published in our October issue, a few were distributed in each Ward. They had no programme of ear-

tickling, side tracking, vote-catching "paliatives" and did no canvassing. The candidates were practically unknown and had not climbed into popularity on the backs of the working class, by posing as 'leaders' of unemployed deputations 'right to live' councils, and similar confusionist conglomerations".

Arising out of these Battersea contests, the question of non members signing nomination papers for candidates, was raised. The Executive Committee ruled that in future only Party members should sign nomination forms, which was later embodied in Party Rules.

The opening paragraphs of the election leaflet for the general election of this year was as follows:—

"Fellow members of the Working Class! at the present moment you, or those of you possessed of votes, are being urgently reminded of a fact that you may be pardoned for having forgotten—you are of consequence; then you, who but yesterday were 'hands,' dependant, hirelings, articles of merchandise are today dictators, history-makers, freemen, you are the power in the State. You hold the destiny of the Empire in the hollow of your hand. Yesterday, those of you who were unemployed were whining wastrels, scum unemployed, treated as children on the one hand and dogs on the other. Today if you have votes—you are the bone and sinew of England's greatness. 'You count.'"

"It is a fact you may have forgotten. It is some time since you were so generally and emphatically reminded of it. It may be some time before you are so reminded of it again."

"But sufficient for the day, is the fact of your greatness—if you have votes. If you have not you are still clods cyphers, 'hands' merchandise. Get back to your hovels, your single room tenement, your sweat shops, back to your wage-slavery if you are fortunate enough to be employed, back to your whining wastrelism, to the outer darkness of impotent despair—if you are of the hungry multitude who lack the means of sustenance. Back, scum, to-day has nothing for you."

"But, if you have votes 'men of England, heirs of glory' you 'hardy sons of Labour,' then—England expects that every man this day will do his duty! And what is your duty?"

The leaflet went on to deal with the Political Parties, and their programme. This quotation is an example of the style of writing, and also a reminder of the fact that universal adult suffrage is quite recent.

In December 1906, Battersea Branch, proposed to contest the London County Council Elections. Comrades Fitzgerald, and Jackson, were chosen by the E.C. as candidates. This action was challenged by the Edmonton Branch on the grounds that the policy of contesting these Elections was one for a Delegate Meeting to decide. The Delegates confirmed this form of activity at the January Meeting. It was later found that Jackson was not eligible as a candidate the final choice being J. Fitzgerald and M. Neuman. There is no evidence of these comrades having gone to the polls, so one presumes L.C.C. Elections have not been contested.

September of 1908 provided the next opportunity, with a Bye-Election at Haggerston, where a candidate named Burrows was standing for a reformist organisation. An article in the SOCIALIST STANDARD carried the title "The Harrying of Haggerston and the burying of Burrows." The article is too long to quote. It should be read as a fine example of political writing of the period. It had humour and sarcasm and is a joy to read, even to-day long after the event it is dealing with has been forgotten.

In 1908 it was the provincial Branch of Burnley having

a go. They sought, and obtained, permission for Comrade Tamlyn to contest the Gammon Ward, and Comrade Schofield the Whittleford Ward of Burnley. The total poll was 15 votes between them. The December SOCIALIST STANDARD said "We do not claim to have won either a numerical, or a moral victory, although our poll was minute we claim to have done some good, and are not dissatisfied with the results."

About the same time Tooting Branch put forward Comrades Cooper, Joy and Barker for the Tooting Ward, the result being 60, 58 and 56 respectively. The SOCIALIST STANDARD's comment was: "We think we found fifty six supporters for the Revolution, and are encouraged in the hope that it is not altogether hopeless to appeal to the Electorate on the straight issue—Socialism."

1910 was a busy year for the Party in the Electoral field. In January 50,000 General Election manifestoes were printed and distributed. Space prohibits quotations from this leaflet so only a brief reference is possible. Like all leaflets of this type it deals with the political parties of the period, Tories, Liberals and Labour Party, and gave the Socialist Party attitude to the points raised.

Tottenham Branch was in the field of municipal Elections in April that year. With Comrade F. W. Stern for the High Cross Ward, and Comrade A. Anderson, F. G. Rourke in the St. Anns Ward, of the local Urban Council. The voting was Anderson 143, Rourke 67, F. W. Stern 63.

A Bye-Election at Walthamstow provided the local branch with the opportunity to issue a fine Election leaflet.

In the same year there was a meeting of London members at Battersea, to discuss the action of Party members, if elected to local bodies. There does not appear to be any record of results of the discussion.

The Oath of Allegiance.

At the Annual Conference of 1910 electoral matters had a long discussion on a resolution from Manchester branch, "That any member elected to Parliament shall not take the oath of allegiance." That this resolution was tabled in spite of a decision by the 1909 Conference, "That the position of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, in reference to the oath of allegiance to Parliament, is that oaths and forms imposed by the constitution shall not be allowed to prevent elected representatives from taking their seats," showed the interest aroused by the issue. A resolution to send the question to branches was lost by 14 to 13 votes. Conference finally endorsed the 1909 ruling, and this was endorsed by a poll of the party and still stands as the Party position to-day. Since that year there have been no candidates put forward at municipal Elections.

Leaflets were, however, issued for the municipal elections of 1913, by the Watford Branch.

During the war years 1914-18 the party had a hard struggle to survive and there were no electoral activities. For the general election in December 1918 the front page of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, reproduced at the beginning of this article, showed the position of the Party.

The Move to Contest Parliamentary Elections.

The next move in Electoral Activity came in 1928. At a meeting of Party members, held in Friars Hall on Saturday, Feb. 25th, with seventy-nine members present, a resolution was moved by Higgs and Cash: "That this meeting of Party members declares itself in favour of running Socialist candidates, at Parliamentary Elections at

the first opportunity, and, therefore, endorses the action of the E.C. in inaugurating a fund for that purpose." It was carried 41—18.

From this meeting can be traced the later developments in Electoral activity.

At the next General Election, in 1929, the E.C. agreed that Comrade Barker, of Tooting Branch, should be the prospective candidate for North Battersea, in opposition to Tory, Liberal, Labour and Communist candidates. An attempt was made to get the necessary funds, but it was hopeless, as the Parliamentary fund at that period showed a balance of £21 1s. 2d.

Battersea Branch were able to get in a good meeting at the local Town Hall, by using Comrade Barker in what has become known as a challenge meeting, at which the Tory and Liberal candidates put in an appearance. There was an audience of about nine hundred. This was the first gesture on the Parliamentary field.

For the next ten years Electoral activity was confined to issuing an occasional leaflet.

Electoral Activity in 1937 was a decision to contest one of the East Ham constituencies. Much work was done by bands of comrades in door to door canvassing. Meetings were held and Committee rooms were obtained, but activity was brought to an end by the outbreak of war in 1939.

After the Second World War.

The small amount of active work the Party was able to indulge in during the war years was followed by the 1945 election when, in Paddington North, the Party for the first time contested a Parliamentary Election. Members gave of their best to make the campaign a success. The weather was good, making outdoor meetings possible, and members were able to use the long June and July evenings for literature distributing and canvassing. The highspot of the Election, for those of us engaged in it, was the hiking and filling from top to bottom, of the Metropolitan Music Hall; a thrill which the writer of these words will never forget, thousands of men and women to hear the Socialist case. Finally, on July 5th, 1945, for the first time in the history of the working class movement, a Socialist offered himself for Parliamentary election, when the name of our Comrade Clifford Groves appeared on a voting paper.

The remainder of the story of the Party's activity in this field, is recent; the contesting of each Bye-Election, as they occurred in Paddington North, and the contesting of two seats at the 1950 Election. Paddington North, with Comrade McClatchie as the candidate, and East Ham South, with Comrade H. Young. Finally the last Bye-Election of November, 1953, with Comrade Waters as the candidate.

In all Elections the Party has entered, the results, judged by votes, have been very small, but that, of course, is not the standard by which Socialists judge the value of these activities.

This review of Party activities in the electoral field started out on a personal note, appropriate to the fact that it has been written for the Jubilee issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD. May I, as one, who has had the good fortune to work on every Parliamentary Committee since 1929, send greetings to all those comrades, who by their efforts have made possible the work that has been done in this field, and hope they found joy, as I have in working together for our cause, Socialism

R. AMBRIDGE.

GREETINGS

FROM THE

U.S.A.

Just as we are going to press we can record a visit by two comrades from the World Socialist Party of America, comrades Rab and Gloss. This visit has shown how closely associated in principles and policy our two parties are. They addressed a number of outdoor meetings in London and the Provinces and the policy they expressed was undistinguishable from that expressed by our own speakers.

This welcome illustration of the fundamental unity of our two parties, although thousands of miles away from each other, augurs well for the progress of the Socialist movement. They take back with them memories of the warmth of their reception, and we hope it is the beginning of an international exchange of delegates.

It is fitting that this should have happened when we are celebrating our fiftieth anniversary.

We hope the day is not far distant when we can also welcome delegates from the Socialist Party of Canada and the Socialist Party of Australia and of New Zealand.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

RETROSPECT

The first number of the SOCIALIST STANDARD came out in September, 1904, a few years after the Boer War had ended and before World Wars had come into the picture. At that time the German Social Democratic Party had the support of millions, the Socialist Party of America was strong enough to put forward a candidate for the Presidency, in France, Austria and Italy, there were strong parties claiming to be Socialist, and even in the East the movement had spread—Russia, China and Japan, had small parties. Labour Parties and Welfare States had not yet emerged from the reformist womb, and the emptiness of nationalisation as a panacea for social ills had yet to be demonstrated.

To the uncritical it looked as if Socialism was "just round the corner." What they overlooked was the weakness of the parties that claimed to be Marxian and the futility of those that did not. All of them were tied to reform programmes that ultimately put out the fire of revolution they had lighted; all of them were dominated by the fatal principle of leadership and all of them collapsed under the blow of the first Great War.

On the first page of the first number of the SOCIALIST STANDARD there was an article from which we take the following paragraphs:—

"In the Socialist Party of Great Britain we are all members of the working class, and cannot hope that our articles will always be finely phrased, but we shall at least endeavour to lay before you on every occasion a sane and sound pronouncement on all matters affecting the welfare of the working class. What we lack in refinement of style we shall make good by the depth of our sincerity and by the truth of our principles."

"In dealing with all questions affecting the welfare of the working-class our standpoint will be frankly revolutionary. We shall show that the misery, the poverty, and

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

the degradation caused by capitalism, grows far more rapidly than does the enacting of palliative legislation for its removal. The adequate alleviation of these ills can be brought about only by a political party having Socialism for its object. So long as the powers of administration are controlled by the capitalist class so long can that class render nugatory any legislation they consider to unduly favour the workers."

That has been the outlook of the SOCIALIST STANDARD during the past fifty years.

The leading article of the first number set down in detail the position of the workers under Capitalism and the only solution to their problems. On another page our Declaration of Principles was printed, and it is exactly the same as has appeared in every issue since.

Everything of fundamental importance that had a bearing on Socialist policy has been thoroughly examined and discussed in the SOCIALIST STANDARD over the years.

The position and function of Trade Unions and the Socialist attitude towards them was the subject of discussion that appeared during some months of 1906. Industrial Unionism was the subject of numerous articles and correspondence from 1904 almost to the present day.

When the first Great War broke out in 1914 we printed our War Manifesto, in September of that year, in which we proclaimed our opposition to war, set forth the causes of war in the modern world, and pointed out that victory or defeat left the position of the workers, as a subject class, untouched.

When the Russian Revolution occurred in 1917 we printed an article which examined what lay behind that upheaval and stated, what subsequent history made plain, that it was not, and could not be, a Socialist Revolution. As information came along later we demonstrated from the facts available the accuracy of our original statement.

In 1926 we showed the weakness of the General Strike

and urged that, if the workers came out on strike they should do so in a body; if not successful within a short time they should go back in a body and not drift back. We pointed out that if they drifted back they would undo the work of years. In fact they were let down by the leaders they trusted and the masters were enabled to get rid of many limitations on their profit hunting that the workers had previously achieved.

In 1939, when the second Great War broke out, we reiterated the position we had put forward in 1914. In both wars our propaganda efforts suffered heavily. In the first war our speakers were arrested and our Head Office raided. In the second war we fared a little better but our Head Office suffered from bombing and it and much of our literature and records were destroyed.

In recent years we have put forward candidates for

Parliament and our election literature has been reprinted in the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

In the course of fifty years the SOCIALIST STANDARD contains a faithful record of our work and our progress. In its columns will be found a mass of searching theoretical and historical articles that cover the main facts, principles, and policies, that are useful to the workers in their struggle to emancipate themselves from their subject position and to achieve the aim that we have unflaggingly put before them, the establishment of Socialism—a new form of society in which each will give according to his capacities and take according to his needs.

When the workers understand, accept and act upon the views we have been pressing to their notice the social ills they suffer from today will vanish like a bad dream.

THE STERILITY OF LABOURISM

To look for any underlying theoretical unity in the Labour Party is like looking for the proverbial black cat in a dark room—that isn't there. From scratch the organisation was opportunistic and eclectic. "We are committed to no one creed or dogma" was one of its earliest dogmas, while its adamant refusal to commit itself to any definite principle was the nearest approximation to a principle.

It was John Ward who said at a Labour conference prior to the Labour Party being formed "they wanted to get their feet planted in the House of Commons and should not be a bit particular the way they did it." While Keir Hardie and others present ostensibly protested at this, nevertheless the election pacts and arrangements between the Labour Party and Liberals, on whose support they relied, showed it was Ward's view which prevailed.

Because the political accommodation of the Labour Movement was broad it was able to house diverse and divergent ideas. Little wonder it spoke with many tongues. There were those preaching violent revolution. Others were the most gentle of evolutionaries regarding even the concept of class struggle as "bestial Darwinism," smuggled into "Socialist politics." Many were internationalists whose slogan was, "Workers of the World, Unite." Some were "Little Englanders" advocating "Britain for the British." There were militant atheists denouncing religion as the real enemy of Socialism, and devout Christians seeing "The New Testament" as the revealed and authorised Socialist catechism and Jesus the Socialist prototype.

Then there were the Fabians who subscribed, one

might almost say, oversubscribed, to Harcourt's dictum, "We are all Socialists now." It was the Fabians who made State activity and Socialism, synonymous terms. In the howling desert of capitalism they discovered "Socialist" oases in the form of parks, playing fields, cemeteries, municipal baths, washhouses, and public conveniences, etc. Even the War Office and Scotland Yard had the character of Socialist institutions. Just as Liberal and Tory Governments might regard themselves as anti-Socialist but in so far as they carried on extensive and ever extending State activities were willy nilly instruments for Socialism. The Fabian policy of permeation or "boring from within," of various political parties was the political tactic to influence, "building up Socialism in one country."

Because the Fabians believed in "the silent revolution going on every day in our midst," some regarded the arrival of the Socialist party, i.e., the Labour Party, a little doubtfully. They thought that if this new party shouted Socialism at the top of its voice its revolutionary overtones might not only penetrate the ears of Liberals and Tories but into the fashionable drawing rooms of distinguished members of the Fabian Society with disturbing effects. To some Fabians it seemed that the thing most likely to retard Socialism, was Socialists. It was this "creeping Socialism" which, from the early battles of ideas, finally emerged victorious. It became the "official Socialism" of the Labour Party.

This Socialism is not a definite conception capable of actual realisation but an ideal to which there is only an imperceptible approximation. On the road to "Social-

ism" we shall meet many milestones which will tell us how far we have come. We shall not, however, meet any milestone which informs us how far we have to go before the Socialist goal is reached. Like the pilgrims on The Golden Road to Samarkand "... we shall go always a little further."

Nevertheless many pioneers of the Labour movement did not view Socialism as a merely recurring decimal of State activity. Many might have mistakenly believed that Nationalisation and various forms of State activity might serve as a means to an end but they did not believe that these things were an end in itself. Thus, Keir Hardie in accepting as he said "State Socialism," despite all its drawbacks, as an evolutionary stage in social development nevertheless held that it was "a preparation for free Communism in which the rule of life would be, from each according to his capacity to each according to his needs." (From *Serfdom to Socialism*, p. 89).

In fact a cursory glance at Labour literature prior to 1914 reveals sharp differences in outlook between present day Labourites and those of the past. At least many of the earlier ones had a sounder grasp of the essentials of capitalism and saw the alternative to present society as a social whole and not like the present ones as a thing of shreds and patches. One feels that many of the old stalwarts would have been astonished to learn that the Socialist objective is a mixed economy with its "Socialist" sectors and "private enterprise" sectors. Or that the theoretical basis of the new society is that piece of plagiarised Rousseauism, "The Managerial Revolution," preened of its sinister implications in order to fit in to current political requirements.

We may even note the exuberant vitality of the Fabian Fathers as compared with the indecisive and faded outlook of the Fabians unto the second and third generation. In the first Fabian Essays, perhaps the most radical of Fabian writing, the authors not only had very definite ideas about capitalism but a sublime faith in the way they were going to alter it. In the *New Fabian Essays* (1952) its authors are not only uncertain as to what capitalism actually is but even more uncertain what it is going to turn out to be. According to one of its authors, Mr. R. H. S. Crossman, the Labour Party has lost its way and it seems is not certain of finding it again. Thus the "official and authorised Fabian guide to British capitalism" turns out to be an uncharted voyage of discovery. Having no real knowledge of social navigation the New Fabians are fortified with the belief that this strange and experimental journey will if they go on and on finally get them somewhere—it will, but where?

It is not suggested that some basic change has taken place in the Labour Movement's outlook. In fact old views with new views have been so curiously mixed that it is impossible to separate one from t'other. The significant differences are to be found in the change of mood and sentiment. In the past many in the Labour Movement had at least a vision of an international organised working class transcending national barriers. They believed this was bound up with the growth of the movement. The advent of a Labour Party to power has had a totally opposite effect. The Labour Governments were inevitably emeshed in power politics with its concomitant power group notions and its ideological division of good countries and bad countries. In such circumstances it not

only had to nullify the old international views but use its political and industrial influence among workers to actively suppress it. In far off days the Labour Party claimed that its accession to political strength would raise the standard of internationalism to a higher level. Today it lies in the political gutter.

In the past there existed in the Labour Movement a genuine militant sentiment. For many Pacifism was an article of "Labour" faith. By a supreme irony it was "Labour" as the governmental power who not only initiated peace time conscription but the greatest of all peace time rearmament drives. One can be a Pacifist Labour M.P. today advocating total disarmament but it is almost as anachronistic as an atheistic Republican on the Conservative front bench.

Undoubtedly the dynamic of the early Labour Movement was its political faith and vitality. A faith and vitality which succeeded in weaning the political allegiance of millions of workers from the old and powerful political parties of capitalism. Its weakness was rooted in its dualistic attitude. On the one hand it strove to be different from the older parties by its emphasis on social aims whose goal was the suppression of the existing order. On the other it might, and did, become a mass party dedicated to social reforms and was thus irrevocably committed to the assumption that capitalism was capable of indefinite and progressive improvement. From this it followed that their criticism of society took on an ethical rather than economic evaluation. If capitalism was capable of indefinite improvement then the failure of the old parties to have made any worthwhile progress lie in the fact it was administered "by hard faced politicians"—bad men—whereas it would be administered by good men—the Labour Party. Although if the pioneers were able to view present day capitalism they might, in spite of two Labour Governments, still think it was being run by bad men.

In short the Labour Movement failed to see the real nature of the social problem. They failed to see that British capitalism was an interlocked world system with no independent momentum of its own, or that the only way for a profit making system to act consistently is to make profit. In short they saw capitalism from the parochialism of a closed economy without seriously taking into account the internal distortions set up by external stresses and strains. Thus by abstracting from capitalism the concrete features which make it capitalism they proposed to administer a capitalism which wasn't capitalism.

Moreover, the Labour Party in seeking mass support had to attract people who did not want capitalism changed but merely changes in capitalism. From that moment their ideals were not merely hampered but hamstrung. The need for popular support came into conflict with their avowed aims. The Labour Party by thus accepting this society was forced to work for it, not against it. So it repeats the age long story of social reformism the bartering of its beliefs and ideals for votes. It begins by declaring it will not play the game of capitalist politics. It ends by coming to power and accepting all the rules of the game and its youthful dreams become "the insubstantial pageant faded." If in this crazy world, haunted by uncertainty and fear and a neurotic impulse to self destruction, the Labour Party still has its dreams, then they are of the order of nightmares.

E. W.



A. ANDERSON



J. FITZGERALD

TWO OLD MEMBERS

Anderson and Fitzgerald were two of the most active members of the Party during the first 25 years of its existence. Anderson was a house-painter and Fitzgerald a bricklayer; and in the early days both of them were often out of work. Both were excellent indoor and outdoor speakers and debaters, both were members of the Executive Committee during the whole of that time, and both held their convictions strongly and argued them fiercely and forcefully. They were both very active in internal party controversies, though sometimes on the opposite sides.

Yet in spite of their similarities they were, in many respects, opposites.

Anderson was tall, rawboned, commanding; he was a first-class orator, with a high carrying voice, and could carry on speaking untiringly for hours at a stretch. He was at his best on the outdoor platform where his clarity, quick wits, rhetoric and caustic humour either drove his opponents into fits of laughter or reduced them to despair and impotent anger.

Fitzgerald, on the other hand, was short, compact, tough and had a deep powerful voice. He was at his best indoors. He prepared his material carefully, used simple language and put forward powerful logical and direct arguments, rarely employing humour or invective and never using rhetorical flourishes of any kind.

Anderson's chief activity was speaking and he organised the Party's outdoor propaganda in London for most of the time. He was in his element at rowdy spots where his forceful manner dominated the audience and quietened

the disturbers. Before the Party was formed he was on the Provincial Executive of the Social Democratic Party and was active in Scotland.

Just before the 1914-18 war broke out the Party raised a fund to put a paid organiser into the field and Anderson was appointed to the job. The outbreak of war, and the difficulties into which the Party landed on account of it, put an end to the project.

In 1925 Anderson developed Arterio-sclerosis and died in 1926 at the early age of 47.

Although a regular and active speaker Fitzgerald's principal interests were writing and taking classes in economics. He was on the Editorial Committee of the SOCIALIST STANDARD from the early days until his death, and he wrote many excellent theoretical articles. He wrote the first article on the Russian Revolution, which appeared in the August, 1917, number and placed that upheaval in its proper perspective.

Fitzgerald was a first-class debater; two of the debates he represented the Party in were reprinted as pamphlets under the titles the "Conservative Party" and the "Liberal Party"—others appeared in the SOCIALIST STANDARD. The two that appeared in pamphlet form were reported verbatim and reading them discloses how clearly, simply and accurately, he spoke.

Fitzgerald was exceedingly helpful to young members, always willing and anxious to assist them in their studies by the loan of books, advice in their reading, and the resolving of knotty points.

In spite of his work for the Party Fitzgerald found

time for other studies. He passed an examination for building construction and, after a period, teaching mathematics to aspirants for the Indian Civil Service, he got a permanent job teaching at the Brixton School of Building.

Fitzgerald was an assiduous cyclist; he and the small-framed bicycles he designed for himself, were inseparable. He went to meetings and everywhere else on his bicycle, wet or fine.

In 1925 Fitzgerald contracted kidney trouble. He got temporary relief from an operation but the trouble returned again towards the end of 1928. He returned from a cycling holiday in Austria, Italy and Switzerland, to undergo two operations, and died in the spring of 1929 at the age of 56, a fortnight after the second operation.

Anderson and Fitzgerald, each in their own way, were sound guiding influences in the formative period of the Party's history. When they died in the twenties they were sad losses to the Party. They did their work during the toughest part of the Party's life when speaking was difficult, audiences hard to get, and the Party known to few, and they did not live to see the fruit of their labours.

GILMAC



A. E. JACOMB

A. E. Jacomb was an active member of the Social Democratic Federation at the end of the last century and the beginning of this, and was a member of a group which came out of that organisation to form the Socialist Party of Great Britain in 1904, helping to shape the Party's fundamental principles and policy. He was a compositor by trade and in the early years of the Party, in fact up to the beginning of the 'twenties, he was responsible for the printing of the SOCIALIST STANDARD and pamphlets. In this work he was a tower of strength, for the job was certainly not a sinecure. Often enough there were not sufficient articles to fill the paper and Jacomb had to make up the rest, under various pseudonyms, as he was doing the composing.

For many years, up to the end of the first Great War, Jacomb was a member of the Executive Committee and the Editorial Committee. He was a fine writer with a keen and caustic humour, contributing many excellent articles to the SOCIALIST STANDARD. He also drafted two of the Party pamphlets: "Socialism" and "The Socialist Party: Its Principles and Policy." He gave the best he could do to the Party although his life was one long struggle against financial difficulties.

It was a pitiful business that, towards the end of his life, Jacomb found himself in opposition to the Party about his attitude to the Spanish upheaval and to the last Great War, which led him to make a number of extravagant statements in the heat of controversy. But although he believed the policy of the Party was wrong, he still held fast to his fundamental socialist convictions. The vehemence of his criticism was due to his belief that the Party was on a wrong and fatal track, and to his anxiety to put it back again on what he thought was the right track.

Jacomb was a very fine character; simple and sincere, and a genuine and earnest champion of socialist principles for the whole of his long life.

He suffered from heart trouble for many years before his death in the autumn of 1946.

PARTY PUBLICATIONS

The following is a list of pamphlets published by the Party during the past fifty years, with date of publication.

Party Manifesto	1905
Handicraft to Capitalism by Kautzky	1906
Art, Labour and Socialism by Wm. Morris	1907
The Working Class by Kautzky	1908
The Capitalist Class by Kautzky	1908
Socialism and Religion	1910
Socialist Party and The Liberal Party	1911
Socialist Party and Tariff Reform	1912
Socialism	1920
Why Capitalism will not Collapse	1932
Socialist Party and Questions of the Day	1932
Principles and Policy	1932
War and the Working Class	1936
Czech Crisis and the Workers	1938
Socialist Party Exposes Mr. Chamberlain	1938
Debate with Barbara Wootton	1940
Nationalization or Socialism	1945
Is Labour Government the Way to Socialism?	1946
The Beveridge Plan	1946
Children's Allowances	1946
The Racial Problem	1947
Communist Manifesto and Last 100 Years	1948
Russia Since 1917	1948
Socialist Party and War	1950
Questions of the Day	New Edition

Revised editions of some of these pamphlets and numerous leaflets have also been issued.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD IN WAR TIME

From September, 1904, until the late twenties the SOCIALIST STANDARD was received from the printer in large flat sheets and had to be folded at Head Office. As soon as word was received that the paper would be delivered, generally on the last Saturday in the month members would gather round a table at Head Office and spend most of the afternoon and evening folding. During the folding discussions would be carried on about economics, history, or some of the many subjects that were in the air at the time. Members from the London branches would collect the branch quota and the parcels would be made up for posting.

During the 1914-18 war these jobs had to be carried on just the same. By 1916 the number of members who were able to carry on the Party work had been greatly reduced and those who were left were faced with many difficulties. Filling the columns of the S.S. became a major problem. Most of the regular writers were too busy keeping out of the Services to do much; one or two of them were able to send occasional articles from distant places. Consequently the supply of articles was scarce. There were also occasional difficulties with the printer who was dubious about printing some articles which, owing to their anti-war attitude, he feared would land him into trouble, though A. E. Jacomb, who did the compositing, was not the least bit disturbed. One article the printer refused at the last minute to print, and, as it was too late to replace, the S.S. was printed with a blank column. The blank column appeared in the S.S. for February, 1916, and was headed "Lloyd George and the Clyde Workers." In the middle of the column appeared the words:

"The firm who machines this paper has refused to print the article which was set up to appear under the above heading. We are therefore compelled to withdraw the article. We congratulate the Government on the success of their efforts to preserve the 'Freedom of the Press.'"

It is only fair to the printer to say that anyone who read that article now would have some sympathy for him: it was certainly pretty strong!

For the first eight months of the war the front page of the S.S. carried an article in large type dealing with the war; all except one were signed by the Executive Committee. The following were the titles, which are self-explanatory:—

- September 1914. The War and the Socialist Position.
- October 1914. The Greater War, Our Appeal for Recruits.
- November 1914. Peace in the Hands of the Workers.
- December 1914. The Real Foe.
- January 1915. Under Martial Law.
- February 1915. Socialism and the European "Socialists."

- March 1915. A Russian Challenge. (This was a declaration by the Central Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, signed by M. Maximovich, which the allegedly Socialist journals had refused to print.)

- April 1915. Our Party Conference and the War. (This was another war manifesto.)

The July 1917 SOCIALIST STANDARD contained "The Manifesto of the Socialist Party of Great Britain to the proposed International Congress." This was a Congress of alleged Socialist Parties, relics of the Second International, whose proclaimed aim was to work out a policy for bringing about peace.

The Manifesto pointed out in detail how those invited to the Congress would go there with lies on their lips: they were neither Socialists nor anti-war, for they had already supported the war on one side or the other. This Manifesto reprinted two statements from our September 1914 Manifesto setting forth our attitude to the war and pointed out:—

"No matter which group of the Masters win the struggle, the Workers remain enslaved. The division of interest is not between the people of the world, but between the Classes—The Master Class and the Working Class. Not, therefore, in their fellow workers abroad, but in the Master Class at home and abroad, are the working-class enemies found.

"What interest have the Workers, then, in either starting or carrying on war for their masters? Absolutely none."

In July, 1918, the S.S. had to be cut down from eight pages to four owing to paper shortage. This was equivalent to eight pages of the present S.S., because the size of leaf then was double the present size.

In August, 1918, the front page contained an article entitled "The Revolution in Russia; Where it Fails." This article summed up the position as far as the scanty information at the time would permit. The writer asks the question are the Russian people ready for Socialism and answers as follows:—

"Unless a mental revolution such as the world has never seen before has taken place or an economic change has occurred immensely more rapidly than history has ever recorded, the answer is 'No!'"

From the beginning to the end of the first Great War the SOCIALIST STANDARD maintained our Socialist attitude to war without qualification of any kind. Throughout the Second Great War it also held steadfastly to the same attitude."

GILMAC

UNDER MARTIAL LAW

"Those of our friends who lend support to our outdoor propaganda meetings will be aware that for the past week or two those meetings have been suspended. Also, readers of this issue will notice that the Lecture List which, until this date has appeared on the back page of this, our official organ, has now been withdrawn. These occurrences demand some few words of explanation, which are offered here.

"When the war broke out in August the Socialist Party unflinchingly proclaimed the Socialist position in relation to it. From our platforms and, at the first opportunity, in the columns of our organ, we took up the clear and definite attitude dictated by Socialist principles and working-class politics. This attitude, it is quite needless to say, was neither popular nor free from peril. It drew down upon us on the one hand the hostility of the rampant jingo hooligans of the streets, and on the other hand the 'patriotic' fury of certain parasites 'dressed in a little brief authority.'

"Our object was not to bid defiance to a world gone mad, but to place on record the fact that in this country the Socialist position was faithfully maintained by Socialists. With this object in view we placed our backs against the wall and fought. Our platforms were smashed up and our members injured by mobs egged on by bourgeois cowards who, as usual, had not the spunk to do their own fighting for themselves. Not this only: one of our speakers was arrested and imprisoned, while others were dragged before the magistrates and bound over to keep the peace? In some instances the proceedings were rounded off by the victims being discharged from their employment by their 'good, kind masters' for daring to hold political opinions of their own.

"We fought this fight long enough to achieve our purpose. In the columns of the last four issues of the SOCIALIST STANDARD stand recorded our action in this crisis, showing to the working class of the world that the Socialist Party in this country, acting in accordance with its declared principles, kept its hands clean in this, the most momentous crisis of its history. That is an asset to carry forward to the time when the war is finished.

"But now we are faced with a new situation. On the 28th of November last were issued Orders in Council (Defence of the Realm [Consolidation] Regulations) which render the prosecution of our propaganda a work of extreme peril. The following extracts from the Regulations will serve to show the nature of the impediment we are up against.

"27. No person shall by word or in writing or in any newspaper, periodical, book, circular, or other printed publication spread false reports or make false statements or reports or statements likely to cause disaffection to His Majesty or to interfere with the success of His Majesty's forces by land or sea or to prejudice His Majesty's relations with foreign powers, or to spread reports or make statements likely to prejudice the recruiting, training, discipline, or administration of any of His Majesty's forces, and if any person contravenes this provision he shall be guilty of an offence against these regulations."

"57. A person found guilty of an offence against these regulations by a court martial shall be liable to be sentenced to penal servitude for life or any less punishment."

In face of these restrictions and penalties the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party decided to suspend propaganda meetings for the time being, and called a meeting of Party members, at which meeting their action was endorsed.

We are aware, of course, that we lost a unique opportunity of indulging in heroics. We shall be told, perhaps, that we ought to have gone on in defiance of the powers that be till we went down in a blaze of fireworks. Our view, however, was the sane one dictated by our avowed principles. We have always held that the supreme power is in the hands of those who control the political machine. The most we could hope for by going on was to prove that contention. But it is not for us to prove our contentions by acting in opposition to them.

"There was no question of fighting for Socialism or Socialist principles. The Regulations were not, as far as we could judge, in the nature of anti-Socialist legislation. They were merely the precautions ordinarily resorted to by countries embroiled in a serious war. For this very reason we had nothing to gain by running counter to the Regulations, for just as the temper of the working class is, at the moment, such as to prevent them benefiting from our propaganda, so it would prevent them learning anything from our victimisation or martyrdom. Clearly, then, it was our tactics to place ourselves in such a position that only by the Regulations being strained to the point where they would become obviously anti-Socialist could we fall victims to them. These tactics demanded, in view of the risk of having our spoken words twisted and distorted in the courts, that we suspend propaganda meetings for the time, and confine our activities to such forms of propaganda as would secure us from any attack that did not reveal the deliberate intention of our opponents to crush us under the cloak of the present situation."

(The above article appeared on the front page of the SOCIALIST STANDARD for January 1915.)

CHARLES LESTOR



I first met Charlie Lestor over 30 years ago. I was still a kid, he was a mature and impressive man. His effect on the eager audiences of the post 1914-18 war was electric.

He had just arrived in this country after 20 years in Canada and the U.S.A. His Canadian style, accent and rig made him remarkable enough; his address to the large audiences of unemployed ex-servicemen was extraordinary. When most of the I.L.P. and Communist "Unemployed organisers" devoted their attention to personal invective against individual ministers; or the usual temporary nostrums for increase of the dole, or (much more) prevention of its decrease. Lestor never failed, in my hearing, at least, to go straight to the root of the matter.

He just could not speak to an audience without dealing with the capitalist system. From that day to this, I have never wavered in the opinion that of all the speakers I have heard, Lestor, in those days, was out on his own as a powerful exponent of Marxian economics in a popular trenchant style.

In clipped and rugged American terms, without a word wasted, he would grip a large audience from the first phrase and proceed to build up a rigorously logical exposition of surplus value.

"There's no sentiment in Business," "that profit is wrung out of the hides and carcasses of the working-class," "those wages amount to just enough fried fish, chips and beer to keep you working."

These and similar phrases were as typical of Charlie Lestor as the shock of hair, the bushy eyebrows covering the twinkling eyes, and the missing index finger on the waving hand. Tanned by the prairie suns and the Yukon snows as at home in 'Frisco or Winnipeg as in Stepney or Hyde Park, he was a modern cosmopolite, a man of all countries and all trades.

For many years I lost touch, but immediately remade his acquaintance on joining the S.P.G.B. in 1939. Much water had flown under the Bridge, the years were beginning to take their toll. In the bitter weather of 1941 it

was Charles Lestor who attended regularly at the Gloucester Place office of the Party, in a Balaclava hat, sometimes with frost on his eyebrows, to give instruction and counsel to young members in between air raid warnings. Subsequently I read through the minutes of those talks which covered a wide field of History, Economics and Current Affairs.

In 1945, the post of full-time propagandist fell vacant. At an age when most men ask nothing more than their carpet-slippers Lestor applied and was appointed. As Central Organiser of the Party at the time, I went over to see him in N.E. London, and made sure, as it was snowing heavily, that he had some reasonably warm equipment for the bitter trip to Glasgow that night.

The years passed rapidly by, and many were the demands of the Party on Lestor's services. I cannot recall one occasion when these were refused or denied. Whether the meeting was large or small, far or near, early or late, he accepted as a matter of course.

As time marched on, it became apparent that even a man as vigorous, tough and energetic as Charlie Lestor could not beat Anno Domini indefinitely. Still the indomitable spirit refused to give up. In weather when he should have been indoors at home, he was regularly at Lincoln's Inn and Tower Hill. The once powerful and strident tones which would ring out like a blast across a large audience, were sinking into an almost inaudible whisper.

Never did his sense of humour desert him, his remarks were now often punctuated by a quiet chuckle. He tended, in later years, to an exaggerated optimism with regard to Socialism which other well-known Socialist speakers have also expressed.

During the Party's tenure of Rugby Chambers he once remarked to me "When you've stopped learning, you've stopped living." Surely that explains the astounding tenacity with which he stuck to his efforts as a Socialist propagandist, for so long.

HORATIO.

SOME THEORETICAL QUESTIONS

Through having a formal Declaration of Principles to act as basis for membership and for the control of conduct, and through the use of Marxian economics and explanation of social change, the S.P.G.B. has maintained a continuity of outlook unknown in organisations guided largely by the mood and circumstances of the moment. But continuity has not meant refusal to recognise changes of capitalist trends or the emergence of important new information.

Marxian economic conceptions, in spite of the continuous stream of disparagement from critics, have shown themselves remarkably robust in serving to explain the workings of the capitalist system under modern developments. One illustration is the great rise of the price level in the last forty years. While reformist parties have offered "explanations" which consist of little more than attributing the rise of prices to the wickedness of capitalists and the cowardice of governments, Marxian economics enables us to see that the overwhelmingly largest factor has been the devaluation of the currency in terms of gold, in U.S.A., to about one half and in Great Britain to about one-third of the value before World War I.

Examination of current economic problems from the Marxian standpoint enabled the S.P.G.B. to show the absurdity of the periodical waves of currency crankism such as the Douglas Scheme; the truth that rates and taxes, in spite of their deceptive appearance, are a burden on property not on the workers' wages and that war likewise is paid for by the capitalist class; and that while wages do not merely follow prices—other factors including the workers' struggles play a part—the belief that lower prices mean prosperity for the workers is a delusion.

In all these matters economic understanding reinforced the S.P.G.B.'s political principles and saved it from floundering in the confusion that fogged the reformists.

Special reference needs to be made to economic crises.

Marx's valuable material on capitalism's economic crises was published after his death in Volumes II. and III. of *Capital* in virtually the incomplete form in which he left it—he had not reached the stage of rounding it off into a comprehensive whole. In the hands of later writers, friendly, critical, and hostile alike, who have overlooked this, Marx's tentative and piecemeal conclusions have sometimes proved to be dangerous half-knowledge, and many are the explanations of and prophecies about, crises that have not stood up to the test of events; including some by the S.P.G.B. But this has not been of too great importance because the S.P.G.B. was never de-

pendent on crises and crises theories in the way the Communists and some other groups have been. The S.P.G.B. has never been in the position of some reformists of believing that capitalism is only open to condemnation during crises and not during its boom periods; or in the position of Communists of believing that capitalism can only be got rid of through a crisis, a collapse.

This belief has a long history and it has been the S.P.G.B. alone which set itself firmly against it.

When Marx and Engels were first approaching the subject of crises they thought, on the evidence then available, that crises happened at shorter and shorter intervals, each one worse than the one before. They soon dropped the first and worked on the supposition that crises happen about every ten years; and they later recognised that it was possible for a relatively acute crisis to be followed by a mild one. It is, however, probable that Marx, and certain that Engels, thought that the general trend was for crises to become worse. This came out most markedly after Marx's death when we find Engels in 1884, under the influence of the prolonged "Great Depression," believing that the 10 year cycle had gone and that permanent depression had taken its place; and writing two years later that "we can almost calculate the moment when the unemployed . . . will take their fate into their own hands."

Just as 30 years earlier, in 1856, he had expected the coming economic crisis to end capitalism, so he now thought in 1886 that unemployment would drive the workers to revolt; and seven years later he was pinning his hopes on the crisis he anticipated from America's invasion of world markets.

Nobody could hold a theory that crises become worse and worse without being at least strongly tempted to believe that this could not go on indefinitely; a time must come when the crisis would be too great for recovery to be possible. This notion was gratefully taken up by many groups, including the Communists and the I.L.P., for they had dire need of some such theory. How else could they envisage the end of capitalism? The Communists never accepted the S.P.G.B. case that capitalism would be ended by the positive action of a majority understanding Socialism. Instead they trusted in leadership of the discontented masses by an intellectual minority and they welcomed the notion that an economic crisis would provide the opportunity.

The I.L.P. had earlier believed that the road to emancipation was through Labour Party pressure in Parliament for reforms, especially under Labour government. But by

the 1931 crisis, after two Labour Governments, the I.L.P. leaders could no longer be enthusiastic for this and they gladly swallowed the "collapse" theory which promised an easy and early alternative.

The S.P.G.B., which had never needed such a theory, never entertained it and in 1932 marked its opposition to the then popular collapse doctrine by publishing a pamphlet "Why Capitalism will not Collapse," in which was reaffirmed the Party's view that "until a sufficient number of workers are prepared to organise politically for the conscious purpose of ending Capitalism, that system will stagger on indefinitely from one crisis to another."

Because the S.P.G.B. has this firmly based and comprehensive Socialist case against capitalism and is not dependant on particular temporary trends of capitalism, it could view with equanimity unforeseen new developments and reversals of trends that have seriously shaken other organisations. The S.P.G.B. never mixed up State capitalism with Socialism and was therefore able from the start to examine critically the organisation, and finances of nationalisation and expose both the Labour Party propaganda asking working class support for it and the equally fraudulent campaigns against it carried on by sections of the capitalists and by the Tory and Liberal parties. The limited progress made by nationalisation in the U.S.A. and many other countries (contrary to Engels' expectation 60 years ago), and the present perhaps temporary flow of the tide against nationalisation do not at all affect the S.P.G.B. case though they profoundly disturb the reformists to whom nationalisation meant something different and so much more important.

The S.P.G.B., while opposed to building up an organisation on a reform programme, never accepted the two ideas that from time to time have obtained wide acceptance in Labour circles, that the capitalists either would not concede reforms or that they could not afford to do so. So the rise first of unemployment insurance (not foreseen by Engels and others who foretold unemployed revolt) and later of more comprehensive schemes has not in any way affected the basic case of the S.P.G.B. against capitalism.

Nor has the S.P.G.B. case needed to be modified because of the growth in trade union membership and changes in structure and activities. Members of the S.P.G.B. could be and were keenly interested in discussing trade union trends, forms of organisation, strike tactics, etc., but all of these aspects were secondary ones viewed in the light of the recognition that trade union action cannot end capitalism and establish Socialism. The "general strike" of 1926 was for the S.P.G.B. a complete confirmation of views long before thought out and discussed by members. The "general strike," that is to say united action to hold up industry as a whole, had been advocated in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* four years before (Feb. 1922) as the only means of meeting the general attack on wages. The three guiding conditions then insisted upon were that the stoppage should not be prolonged, it would succeed in its object quickly or not at all; that it should be carried out peacefully for its limited objective with no encouragement of riot or destruction to give excuse for the use of the armed forces; and that the decisions to come out and go back should be in the hands of the rank and file and not entrusted to leaders. In the event it was misguided trust in leadership that made the strike of 1926 less impressive and effective than it could

have been, though the S.P.G.B. certainly had never encouraged illusions as to what could be hoped for from such a strike.

On war there has been some development in the Party's attitude due to events stimulating deeper consideration. In 1904 it seemed sufficient to explain war between capitalist powers (and their wars of colonial expansion) and to insist that the workers had no interest in the issues behind war; rounding this off with denunciation of capitalist greed and capitalist cruelty. Little was said of the attitude of Marx half a century earlier of being prepared to support one side in war either on the ground that the outcome would be an advantage for the democratic and working class movements (e.g. the defeat of reactionary Russia), or that the workers should resist aggression against the country they live in. Had this question been raised as a live issue in 1904 there can be no doubt that the Party would have decided then (as it did nearly 30 years later) that Marx was mistaken in thinking that results worth while for the working class or for the speeding up of the introduction of Socialism could result from waging war. That the S.P.G.B. should have reached a conclusion different from his was due partly to the fact that, looking back, we could see that his hoped for beneficial results did not happen; partly to realisation of the tremendous barrier to Socialism presented by nationalism; partly to the much greater magnitude and destructiveness of the weapons and organisations of war; but basically to the S.P.G.B.'s unique appreciation of the importance of understanding in the achievement of Socialism. For us it was unthinkable that lack of understanding could be compensated for by use of force. Hence the affirmation in a lengthy statement on war formally adopted by the Party that "war is not an instrument that can be used by Socialists or supported by Socialists."

The Party's original condemnation of unscientific emotionalism and insistence on the need to understand the causes and methods of social and ideological change and of the emergence of new forms has stood every test. The early issues of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* contained many articles and answers to correspondents on this issue and the article "Unscientific Emotionalism" in the issue for December, 1914, will show how adequately the problems were understood by that time. The following are extracts:—

"When our method of reasoning is applied back through history, we find that man's thoughts have always been governed by his inherited notions and the material conditions surrounding him; and as these conditions have centred round the obtaining of food, clothing and shelter, so at each period of social history the more or less clear relations that were built up on this basis (the particular relations that existed at the particular time between the various producers and distributors of the social wealth) have been reflected in the mind in a correspondingly more or less clear manner. After the break up of the early tribal communities society was split into various classes, and history since then has been the record of the struggles of each class in its turn to control society for its own advantage. When the progress of the method of producing wealth had reached a certain point the class in society that was taking the principal part in production found the old laws (that were suitable to the old governing class) placed a restriction on their further development. The problem of the removal of all these restrictions therefore constantly occupied them, and it is then forced home to their minds that the only solution to the problem of the removal of these restrictions is the control of society by themselves, and the alteration of the existing laws to suit the new con-

ditions. Just so at present the spectacle of the workers doing all the work of the world forces home to the minds of men the socialist view that if the workers produce and distribute all the wealth of society they therefore should own it, and reap the benefit of their work themselves, instead of supporting a group of idlers and good-for-nothings. The solution of the problem is contained within the problem itself. 'Therefore mankind always takes up only such problems as it can solve' (Marx)."

The article showed how the ideas of equality that had lain dormant in the minds of men since the break up of tribal Communism, had been exploited in the past by particular propertied classes struggling for supremacy and wanting the support of the oppressed, and were being exploited now by reformist bodies that did not understand the nature of the problem. The following further extract is a fitting note on which to end this brief survey of some aspects of Socialist theories.

"The socialist reasons from the practical affairs of everyday life to general conclusions, while the emotionalists set out with a plan formed in accordance with certain abstract ideas true for all time (!) without taking account of the historical development of society. They try to organise society according to the idea instead of recognising that the shape their particular ideas take has been formed by society."

H.

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26

"CITIES AND THRONES AND POWERS"

It is difficult to parcel history. We place the feudal age between 500 and 1,500 A.D., and at once have to add there was chattel slavery after the beginning and capitalism before the end of it. When did modern European history begin? A dividing line has to be drawn, and sufficient reason found for it. Most historians agree on the French Revolution as the convenient starting point: there is an intelligible, unbroken series of events that began in 1789. The Socialist Party was founded ten years before it reached its climax.

The outbreak of war in 1914 is often represented as a surprise—England on its August holidays, doused by the unforeseen. In fact, everyone knew it was coming. The Dual and Triple Alliances of the eighteen-nineties defined the position with painful clarity: the great European nations ranged in two hostile groups, each piling armaments and watching for advantage. Popular papers in Britain carried pictures of German militarism—stiff-legged marching regiments, the Kaiser in his spiked helmet—while Haldane reorganized the British army on German lines and France, Austria, Russia and Italy trained their conscript armies. No country could afford to fall behind: "You cannot when other nations are spending huge sums of money which are not merely weapons of defence but are equally weapons of attack," said Lloyd George.

While the larger powers circled and feinted, the small ones were at one another's throats. Montenegro, Serbia, Novibazar, Albania—a dozen states in the Balkans with names that, twenty years later, ring of mustachios and musical comedy. Each of them was land-hungry and full of aggressive nationalism; all of them were caught in the struggle between Russia, Germany and Austria, for passage to the Mediterranean and the East.

Politically, it was a Machiavellian decade of plot and counter-plot—fundamentally, the seethings of a grand-scale eruption of imperialism and international competition. From 1870 onwards Germany had undergone a swift economic growth like that of Britain a hundred years before. Huge industrial combines emerged, trade multiplied, colonization started; shipping increased, and there was tariff protection against American and British goods. Britain had made its empire, held the markets and the sea routes; Germany was the rival, the strongest competitor. Many of the other European nations were still semi-feudal, but their growing commercialism (or that of their neighbours) drew them into the vortex.

The war changed the nature of European politics. Inevitably, it changed the map; its course included the Russian Revolution and the American entry to the arena.

World Politics, 1904-1954

The relics of feudalism were swept away. While Russian aristocrats scurried across Europe for asylum, the Austro-Hungarian empire which had dominated central Europe was reduced to a small republic. The technical needs of twentieth-century warfare gave tremendous impetus to industry everywhere. And, at the end of the war, America was creditor to all Europe on a near-fantastic scale. Production for profit there had to be.

The Peace Treaties were shrewdly savage arbiters of the new balance of power. The principle that the beaten country must pay had been imposed by Germany on France in 1871; now it was imposed on Germany by France and Britain. The attitudes of the victorious nations differed, however. Britain had "raked in"—German ships, spheres of influence in the Middle East, spoils for the Dominions—and needed now a prosperous, buying-and-selling Germany; France's desire was for Germany stripped and subjugated. America withdrew politically but remained economically, bestriding the narrow, exhausted European world like a colossus.

By 1922 it was evident that, whatever had been intended at Versailles, German economic recovery had to be not merely allowed but encouraged. It is worth saying at this point, that the Socialist Party was not mistaken in its commentary before, during or after the war. The four years' havoc was the inevitable climax to the commercial struggle which had spread and intensified for a hundred years. German militarism, which mostly took the blame, was simply the expression of a rapid, aggressive capitalist growth; given slight variations in nineteenth-century history, the enemy could as easily have been France or Russia. Many people in Britain were not patriots in the conventional sense but believed that to break German capitalism would bring jobs and prosperity. In the first wartime issue of the STANDARD facts and figures were quoted to prove them wrong, and wrong they were: mass unemployment began in 1920 and continued till 1939. The post-war world was shaped by capitalism, not by statesmen.

The steps to rehabilitate German economy were precipitated by the Germans' attempt to evade astronomical debts by devaluing the mark. In a few months half a million marks were worth only a penny, and when the Germans reformed their currency the franc fell in turn. America, France and Britain, with scarcely an altruistic motive between them, collaborated to make Germany solvent and revive its industry. Five years' flourishing trade and high profits followed. They ended as abruptly as they began when the 1929 crash caused the with-

drawal of American money from Germany and the collapse that paved the way for Hitler.

Meanwhile the "new civilization" was transforming Russia, and its votaries formed the Third International. The war had killed the second; its members, the social-democrats and the labour leaders, supported the conflict they had pledged themselves to oppose. The doctrine of capitalism's impending collapse became a spearhead of "left-wing" political theory, seemingly given weight by the instability of finance, commerce and governments in Western Europe. The Russian Revolution's effect on post-war world politics was mainly indirect, inspiring new ideologies and policies; the looked-for European uprising never came, and it was twenty years before Russia figured largely on the scene.

The peace treaty had set up the League of Nations, a permanent, elaborately-organized machine for conciliation and arbitration between nations. America was not a member, nor was Germany until 1926. Its Court of International Justice at The Hague was to consider all quarrels between member-states; it sought reduction of armaments, above-board diplomacy, and co-operation between governments. There is a story that Abraham Lincoln, when his two little boys were in tears and a stranger asked the matter, answered: "Just what's the matter with the whole world—I've got three apples and each wants two." It was much the same for the League, except that "wanting two" was economic necessity and the other nations' reactions to disputes depended not on their ideals but on their interests. From 1925 onwards, every country was rearming. When the League disapproved, they left it.

The inter-war period has been called "the long weekend." By the mid-thirties, Monday morning's business was plain. After the depression, competition was fiercer than ever before. Cheap mass-produced goods from America and the East flooded across the tariff frontiers of Europe; the Lancashire mill girl stood in Japanese stockings and waved a Japanese Union Jack at the Coronation of George the Sixth. Italy, empire-hungry, flouted the League and attacked Abyssinia; Britain, with less fuss, annexed a hundred thousand square miles of Southern Arabia, breaking twenty-year-old pledges to the Arabs. Japan, too, lapsed from agreements with the western nations when driven by the same commercial interests to attack China. Pacts and treaties could mean little in the inescapable struggle for markets and empires.

The Spanish Civil War provided a bargaining counter for the European powers, and established anti-Nazism and anti-Fascism as positive political faiths for which the coming world war was to be fought. From early 1938, when Austria was seized, all eyes were on Nazi Germany. Needing still to expand, barred from movement to the west, the Germans went to Czechoslovakia, the most highly industrialized section of the old Austro-Hungarian empire. The hour seemed to have come. The British government, however, incompletely prepared for a European war and with little prospect of gain from it, delayed the outbreak.

Through 1939, frank preparations were made in every country. Japan, still attacking British interests in the East, was Germany's ally. The signal for war was the Russo-German pact in August, and the invasion of Poland its swift consequence. The prevention of another power's

27

dominating Europe was traditional, necessary foreign policy for Britain; Germany, still aggressive with success, had spread across the centre and the east and was within sight of the Rumanian oilfields and the way to the Mediterranean.

Russian imperialism showed its hand long before Russia entered the war; the hand was taken by Britain and America at the Yalta Conference in 1945, when the division of the post-war world was privately arranged. Russia was granted territory and spheres of influence in the Orient, and took them in Eastern Europe. Both coming late into the fighting, America and Russia tower in the war and its aftermath. The doctrine of the balance of power gave way to clear recognition of two great hostile camps of nations across the world, with convalescing Japan the unknown quantity and United Nations continuing the League of Nations' losing struggle for world harmony.

The pattern of these fifty years, then, has been one of expansion; commercial expansion, and with it expansion in the conflicting political units. In 1904, Europe was the bone of contention for a crowd of scuffling puppy-nations. Today it is the world, contested by two great powers and their dependencies. The proposal of a federated Europe, first made in 1940, has been taken seriously since the war; national boundaries, so long considered an obstacle to Socialism, are being erased by capitalism.

Fifty years' international strife. The Socialist Party has commented on but never entered it; it has opposed all wars because the working class can gain nothing from them, has been pilloried for saying so, and lived to see that it was right and the others wrong. World politics are capitalist politics: bluffings, courtships, threatenings and ultimately killings for markets, materials and communications. Not many people care much for the rights of small nations, but everybody cares for his interests in small nations. Men of goodwill and ill will have wrestled to control the consequences of competition; the truth is that they will continue as long as capitalism continues.

R. COSTER.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the Socialist Standard, September, 1904)

"How comes it that the men and women who till the soil, who dig the mine, who manipulate the machine, who build the factory and the home, and, in a word, who create the whole of the wealth, receive only sufficient to maintain themselves and their families on the border line of bare physical efficiency, while those who do not aid in production—the employing class—obtain more than is enough to supply their every necessity, comfort and luxury?"

To find a solution to this problem is the task to which the Socialist applies himself. He sees clearly that only by studying the economics of wealth-production and distribution can he understand the anomalies of present-day society. He sees, further, that having gained a knowledge of the economic causes of social inequality, he must apply this knowledge through political action—through the building up of a Socialist organisation for the capture of Parliament and the conquest of the powers of government."

28



MOSES BARITZ

Moses Baritz was one of the most forceful and courageous characters who ever entered the ranks of the S.P.G.B. Of less than average height, bulkily built and with a stentorian voice, he was a ruthless and merciless man to meet in political debate. He had an uncanny memory, was a terror to his opponents and sometimes an embarrassment to his friends.

He was a Manchester man and much of his political work was done in his native city, and London. He was also active in the U.S.A. and Australia. In 1919 he was invited by comrades to give a series of lectures in New Zealand. On landing in that country he was met by detectives who shadowed him during his brief stay. He became a torment to New Zealand labour leaders and was soon arbitrarily deported. Finding it difficult to enter another country he spent some time on the sea to the annoyance of the shipping company.

Of the numberless anecdotes about Baritz's political activities we can give only one. Once, in Manchester, forcefully debarred from entering a meeting to be addressed by H. M. Hyndman of the old Social Democratic Party, because it was known that he would be an annoyance to the speaker, Baritz climbed on to the roof and blew his clarinet down the ventilator shaft until he was enticed down and allowed to take his seat in the hall.

Later in life his detailed knowledge of music secured him a responsible job with a well known gramophone and radio company where he was highly valued. He broadcast on musical subjects on several occasions, and frequently combined his musical knowledge with his Socialist propaganda. Failing eyesight caused him to wear pebble lens spectacles and in the 1930's his bulky frame, white curly hair and dominant voice, were met with mixed feelings by men of all political parties throughout this country. When he died in April, 1938, at the age of 54 the S.P.G.B. lost a treasured and colourful personality.

W. WATERS.

FROM AN OLD AUSTRIAN COMRADE

During my stay in England, some 40 years ago, I came in contact with your party whose teaching brought me out of the political quandary and wilderness in which I had till then been groping under the influence of Austrian Social Democracy. A study of economics and especially Karl Marx's critical scientific analysis of the operation of the profit-making system, to which study I had been encouraged, was a veritable revelation. What I had previously been taught in Continental labour, "socialist" and "communist" circles and in Arbeiter-Zeitungen, and what is still being propagated to this day as being Socialism or Communism, or "instalments of socialism," revealed itself as the very opposite, namely the consolidation and strengthening of capitalism. So far indeed from touching or interfering with the fundamental principle of private or State-capitalist ownership of the means and instruments of wealth-production and distribution so far from touching the degrading fundamental status of the workers as a disinherited slave-class to capital, the policy of all the so-called Socialist and Communist parties in the world—save the Socialist Party of Great Britain and its companion parties overseas based on their Declaration of Principles—merely serves to prevent the breakdown of, and so to perpetuate the rule of capital and money.

The 60 years of Austrian "socialism" or "instalments of socialism" have proved the truth of this contention. With "socialist" governments in a number of countries, with "socialist" State-presidents, Prime-ministers and Chancellors in others, with three times Labour party governments in Britain up to now, with "communism" in one sixth of the earth, capital and its privileged beneficiaries, the shareholders, the millionaires, Royal families, kings and queens, landlords and aristocrats, the high priests and dignitaries of the church, and the rest of the masters' supporters, are doing as well as ever. They can indeed feel quite safe in their palaces, castles and luxurious mansions, as long as the workers and their families do not ask the impertinent question where their "instalments of socialism" are, or as long as they believe their leaders' assurances that the working-class has been "uplifted" from wage-slavery to "free men." What a farce!

Already at an early stage of my contact with the English comrades and my discussions with them—what a different picture was unrolled before my mental eye! I came to realize that as the very antithesis of capitalism, the term Socialism can mean nothing but the total abolition of private and State-ownership of the means of life and their conversion into the SOCIAL or COMMON property of the people as a whole. It had never struck me

before that the true implications of such a new constitution of society and the completely changed outlook on every phase of human co-existence it is bound to produce, were never dwelled upon in so-called socialist publications. Ignoring, as they do, these implications, the leaders and mouthpieces of the big parties maskading under the banner of Socialism, would seem to look upon a classless and moneyless society as a utopia, or else they are deliberate frauds. As a result of "socialist" education and propaganda provided by these workers' organisations, most of their members will indeed tell you that a society without wages and without money—a society based on the principle: "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his NEEDS" was an impossibility, a utopia. How pleased the capitalists must be with such loyalty of their slaves to capitalism! Well, dear brother, while wage-packets are a cardinal feature of their system of exploitation, they will have no place under socialism, since there will be no employers and no employed. There will only be co-operation in producing the wherewithall to live and enjoy life by so doing. The very word "work" will become generally identified with pleasure. Wealth will no longer be produced for buying and selling for profit, but for U S E. Commerce will be replaced by distribution according to the needs of individuals the world over. With no more buying and selling, and no more money (which becomes unnecessary with the abolition of private property and will go into the museums for future generations to see and marvel at 20th century-man's folly), there will of course also be no more buying and selling of human labour power (wages), no prostitution male or female, and no corruption. The dependence of individuals on other individuals or groups of individuals will cease. Since under socialism the means of subsistence, including all cultural needs and desires, will be guaranteed by society to every human being from the cradle to the grave, irrespective of services rendered, there will be no more need for insurance of any kind, nor pensions. The sick and infirm, the invalids and the old will naturally be provided for as well as the children.

With the gigantic means of production and distribution now at the disposal of mankind, all man's needs and desires can easily be satisfied, especially when the enormous waste due to the protection of the private property "rights" by armaments, police, laws, insurance, etc. ceases, and all the complicated and intricate machinery of financial accounting, Banks, advertising, taxes, and the rest of the capitalist paraphernalia is no longer necessary. As there will be no more private or State-ownership, there can be no more coercion. Government, which is only the

29

executive committee for the management and safeguarding of the interests of property-holders and the maintenance of privilege, will be replaced by a purely technical administration of things. With private interests and the question "does it pay" out of the way, it will be a comparatively simple process. In fact, most of the complications and problems with which society has to grapple today, will fall away. With the world and all its resources controlled and operated by, and in the interest of the people as a whole, as their common heritage, with all separating frontiers gone, as they will under socialism, not only poverty, but insecurity and the rest of the social evils arising therefrom, will be things of the past.

Mankind under socialism will no longer be dependant, for the continuance of life, on the crops and dwellings in this or the other locality. If they are destroyed, no one who is not himself destroyed or struck down by the event, need suffer prolonged hardship; it will simply be a case of perhaps only temporary displacement until "his" devastated area has by common effort or desire been restored. Apart from this, mankind will not be slow in learning from the experience and probably take greater precautions against possible "accidents" and riotous nature in future. Anyway, the destruction and devastation wrought by natural catastrophes is as nothing compared with the havoc and ruin caused through capitalist wars and preparations for war, and the latter will certainly be things of the past under socialism.

Only the revolutionary objective of the S.P.G.B. is worthy of the name of Socialism; what goes today by that name, i.e. what is by present-day "socialist, communist" and labour parties represented and claimed to be Socialism, is a fraud, a delusion and a snare. To have allowed themselves to be misled and bamboozled by this lure, has not been without a heavy penalty for the workers and their families. By identifying themselves with the interests of the property-holders and voting for their political agents and executive committees (the modern capitalist State), the workers have been mixed up, with disastrous consequences, in the mercenary quarrels of their masters over property and trade routes in which the workers have no share whatever. Proof: The 10 years of war which left the workers, both in the "victorious" and the "defeated" countries alike poor, if not poorer than ever before. The present conflicts in Asia, Africa and elsewhere are of course no exception. The European, as well as the American and the Asiatic and African workers are all deluded in the belief that it is a struggle for their freedom. In reality, it is of course part and parcel of the eternal quarrels between rival groups of property-owners—hence of no concern to the propertyless working class. As an unknown poet sang during the first world-war:

"Sing a song of Europe, highly civilized,
"Four and twenty nations, thoroughly hypnotized.
"When the battles opened, the bullets began to sing,
"Wasn't that a silly thing to do for any king?
"The kings were in the background, issuing commands,
"the queens were in their parlours, by etiquette's demands.
"The bankers in the counting-house busy multiplying,
"while all the rest were at the front, DOING ALL THE DYING."

That the teaching of Marx, which the S.P.G.B. and companion-parties elsewhere have been faithfully interpret-

ing and spreading for the past 50 years, should not yet have found a more universal echo and response among the working-class, we all regret of course. The reasons are manifold, not the least of which is our lack of means, and the prodigious means (including the poisonous Radio-spider) at the disposal of the enemy. It cannot, however, discourage us from persevering on the straight and clean path we are pursuing, even if for the time being, we have to be content with the role of being just pioneers.

Upon returning to the Continent after world-war I, efforts, however feeble, were not wanting to make the founding of a revolutionary Socialist Party in England known over here. Comrades of the writer started a group in Dortmund, Germany, which however seems to have eventually disintegrated after the death of the more active members. Before anything could be got underway here in Austria, even the western pattern of democratic liberties was finally lost by the advent first of the Dollfuss-Schuschnigg dictatorship, then by Hitler and now by another occupation, so that for the last 20 years it has been virtually impossible to openly advocate the revolutionary socialist policy. I need hardly remind you of the fate awaiting anyone who exposes publicly in the Russian zone the fraud and maskerade labelled communism.

Personally I enjoy the satisfaction that I could contribute in England my own tiny share and have recorded in the SOCIALIST STANDARD my adherence to that great cause even before capitalism's great crisis and world-wars with atomic weapons had so glaringly demonstrated what capitalist greed, lust for power and domination is capable of and where what one of their most prominent representatives called "this appalling development" will land the human race, unless the workers of the world bestir themselves and join with us to end the nightmare. The Socialist Party of Great Britain points the scientific way how to dethrone the ruthless powers that impose upon the dispossessed the precarious and degrading conditions of existence—the wages-system—and how true Socialism will abolish it and ensure a dignified and enjoyable life for all.

R. F.

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A. JACOBS

Very early in his working life Jacobs became interested in the struggles of the working class. As a young man he lived in Edmonton, then a rising suburb of North London.

By occupation a cigar maker, he had to make the journey daily to Battersea, in South London, having to rise early every morning to reach the workshop.

With ever-increasing numbers of workers on the platform, and few trains to take them, the workers were aroused into agitating for increased trains and workmen's facilities for cheap fares. Meetings were held, and into these Comrade Jacobs flung himself with zeal. One morning he was arrested on Liverpool Street Station and charged with disturbing the peace. His trial took place at the Guildhall, and he was defended by Mr. Thompson, at that time Editor of *Reynolds News*, and acquitted.

He was an active member of the Cigar Makers Union and served on their executive committee. Then he became interested in the propaganda of the old Social Democratic Federation and eventually joined them. At about this period of his life he experienced considerable unemployment and, with a young family, suffered chronic privation and want.

Very shortly after the formation of the S.P.G.B. he decided to join the Party following his resignation from the S.D.F.

For many years he was an enthusiastic worker and spoke at four, five and six meetings a week, very frequently addressing two meetings on Sundays. Following the outbreak of the war in 1914 he never hesitated to hold meetings in Victoria Park, East London, notwithstanding hostile demonstrations at every meeting he addressed.

When "peace" was declared he threw himself with redoubled energy once more into the struggle for Socialism, and only gave up owing to advancing age and decline in his health.

He became almost an institution on the meeting place in Victoria Park, for he seldom missed a meeting on Sundays during many years.

The Party has produced many great workers in its cause, but few gave more ungrudgingly than our old comrade.

He died in his 70th year, early in 1940.

C. F. C.



F. C. WATTS

F. C. Watts was an active member of the group that came out of the Social Democratic Federation to take part in the founding of our Party.

He was an excellent writer and contributed many articles on theoretical subjects to the SOCIALIST STANDARD as well as putting our position in written debates with opponents. He was also a good speaker; he spoke quietly and forcefully without indulging in rhetoric, and his lectures were packed with useful information and logical argument. He was particularly good when speaking on theoretical subjects.

For many years Watts conducted well attended classes on Economics at our various Head Offices; many writers and speakers, in the years before 1914, were greatly indebted to him for advice and for the information he so willingly imparted.

In the early years of the Party Watts undertook the work of keeping in touch with those abroad who were in sympathy with our outlook, and he contributed articles to the journal of the old Socialist Party of Canada *The Western Socialist*. He also translated a number of articles from foreign journals that had been written by prominent radical writers, such as Guesde.

Watts was a carver by trade, and a first class craftsman; some of the internal decorations of the ill-fated Titanic were his work, and he also did some of the carving on the coronation chair of George V.

Like Fitzgerald he was fond of cycling and till late in life he could be met on some of the interesting byways of England and in some of the quaint old inns.

Watts was active from the early days of the Party until late in the twenties; then he seems to have quietly faded out and we have not heard of him for many years.

It may interest those who have read our pamphlet "Socialism and Religion," to know that it was drafted by Watts. It was one of the most popular pamphlets, both here and in America, that the Party produced and a certain Bishop Brown quoted from it, and paid it a tribute, in his pamphlet "Christianism and Communism."

GILMAC.

THE COLLAPSE OF DIRECT ACTION

"INDUSTRIAL Unionism" is merely a pleasant name for Anarchism and "Direct Action." It is one of those almost inevitable elements of confusion and disorganisation which beset the working class in its advance. Every dog has its day, and every freak idea its boom, as though the workers were prepared to traverse every avenue of error before keeping steadily to the right road. The freak idea that the workers can, without the conquest of political power and by means of an industrial organisation alone, "take and hold" the means of life from the capitalists, is one that has just enjoyed its brief boom; but its hollowness has been quickly seen, and its followers have in consequence been rapidly dropping away.

The Industrial Unionists of this country being entirely unable to think out for themselves the adaptation of means to end that would be suitable to the situation here, have hitherto blindly followed in the unsteady footsteps of that peculiarly American organisation, the Industrial Workers of the World, and have added to the gaiety of life by their ludicrous attempt at copying that organisation, from its structure even down to its slang. As things are going however, the British Industrialists seem likely to be hard put to it for something to imitate; and what will their "Union" do then, poor thing?

The Industrial Workers of the World, of Chicago and elsewhere goes from bad to worse. It still continues to propagate—by fission for while the total number of members in all the I.W.W.s grows less and less, the number of distinct and warring I.W.W.s multiplies apace. This suggests the not impossible outcome that in the near future the few remaining adherents of that idea will be each a separate I.W.W. unto himself.

The General Confederation of Labour of France has also until now been a source of joy and inspiration to the Industrialists because of the theatrical policy of the Anarchist section which has hitherto controlled it. The English Industrialists, indeed, are fond of speaking of the Confédération Générale du Travail as though it were a homogeneous body, when, in reality, it is, as its name implies, a heterogeneous agglomeration of unions and federations, each with its own rules, scales of subscription, and the like and comprising almost all shades of political opinion. But with that

We have reproduced an article contributed to the "Socialist Standard" in 1909. It will be seen that the main conclusions of this article are as fresh and pertinent to-day as when it was written. Time, that has played havoc with the parties that flourished at that period, has left the outlook we put forward still clear and sound.

fine contempt for democracy which characterises the Anarchists, they have, until recently, bossed the French labour organisation, notwithstanding that they are a minority of the membership. The "blessed word" of the Anarchists is "liberty," but not the liberty of the greatest number, for that would be democracy, and therefore accursed. Thus in the General Confederation of Labour the voting for the administrators is by group, and not per member, and since the Anarchists are divided into many small groups, and the Socialists united into fewer large ones, the Anarchist minority has been able to govern the majority.

But now there are tears and curses in the Anarchist camp. Their candidates have been beaten, and by a majority which, though it appears small, represents in reality two-thirds of the membership. Niel, an opponent of the Anarchistic "Direct Action," has been elected secretary of the Confederation. The Guesdist organ, *Le Socialisme*, is naturally jubilant about it, and says "The Anarchist-Syndicalists," beaten twice by the election of Niel and of Thil, are again furious. The Confederal organisation was theirs. They thought it would endure so for ever, but they did not notice that their brutal authoritarianism had ended by disgusting even their friends. They believed that their electoral system would ensure their preponderance for ever, but they have been compelled to admit that even such a fantastic system may turn against them. And their chagrin equals their fury. The coarse abuse which their organ, *the Revolution*, pours out upon the "blacklegs" and "traitors" who have elected Niel will complete their discredit in trade union circles.

It will be seen that with the decline of the "Direct Action" movement in France and America the British Industrialists are in a sad plight. They are likely to be left entirely to their own mental resources, and the worst is to be feared for them. It is, indeed, inevitable that the neo-Anarchist movement should, in every country in which it appears, soon begin to fail to pieces of its own unsoundness and futility; while it is equally inevitable that the sound Socialist movement should, in every country on the globe, advance steadily and surely, even if slowly, step by step nearer to its triumph

F. C. WATTS.
(Socialist Standard April 1909).

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol. 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP.—Meets Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at Woodworker's Hall, Coupars Alley, Wellgate. Correspondence to P. G. Cavanagh, 1b, Benzie Road, Dundee.

HERTS.—Secretary: B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wednesdays 15th and 29th September, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

ROMFORD.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.) Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

RUGBY.—Group meets alternate Mondays 6th and 20th August (or 4th and 18th October) at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

WATFORD.—Group meets alternate Thursdays 9th and 23rd September at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Road, (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION FULHAM BRANCH
at 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6,
Thursday, 16th September, at 8 p.m. (sharp).
"The Rationalist Press Association and the S.P.G.B."
—H. J. WILSON

DARTFORD BRANCH DISCUSSION
at
THE LABOUR CLUB,
Lowfield Street, Dartford.
Friday, October 9th—E. WILMOTT
"THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION
OF HISTORY."
Questions and Discussion—Visitors Welcome

ISLINGTON PUBLIC MEETING
"THE SOCIALIST FUTURE" Speaker: S. CASH
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LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS
Mondays: Finsbury Square.
Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
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SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.
Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist
Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee
at the Head Office or to a local branch.

BOREHAM WOOD
Will members and sympathisers willing to
cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood
contact:
I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove,
Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley, Birmingham.

BLOOMSBURY. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. September 9th and 23rd at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

BRIGHTON. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. I. Groves, 92, St. Georges Way, Peckham, S.E.15.

CROYDON meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penze, S.E.20.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: H. J. Wilson, 7, Cyril Road, Bexleyheath, Kent. Tel.: Bexleyheath 1950.

EALING meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCLES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6., (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.). Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

GLASGOW (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halls, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 6th and 20th September, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Farmer, 46, Fernie Street, Glasgow, N.W.

HACKNEY meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Iveney, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

HAMPSTEAD meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Road Met. Stn.). Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware, Middlesex.

HIGH WYCOMBE Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191, Bowerdean Road.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. C. Rowan, 28, Redbourne Avenue, Finchley, N.3.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

LEYTON Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

MANCHESTER Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 7th and 21st September. George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.: Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2. (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

PALMERS GREEN Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

ST. PANCRAS meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. LONDON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, Joan Lester, 59, Childebert Road, Balham, S.W.17.

SOUTHEND meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Grisley, 47, Eastbourne Grove, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

SWANSEA Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7.9.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to D. Deutz, 21, Kenilworth Gardens, Seven Kings, Essex.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m., Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 602 Vol. 50 October, 1954

NEWS ABOUT
MILLIONAIRES

PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY

McCARTHYISM

THE ECONOMICS OF
CAPITALISM

HOW SOCIETY CHANGES

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

Lethal Young Ladies

THE NEW ZEALAND MURDER TRIAL

FEW TOPICS EXCITE MORE INTEREST and become stale more quickly than a spicy, spectacular murder. Everyone knows the facts, makes his summing-up and pronounces his verdict: justice is done, and everyone talks of something else. There is rarely much reason for recalling it, except the sorts of reason that prompt "True Crime Stories," waxwork shows and retired detectives' memoirs. The case of the two New Zealand schoolgirls is no longer news, but it raised questions which need considering from points of view other than the self-righteous tribalism of the Sunday papers.

Briefly to recapitulate, one girl was 15 and the other was 16, and they killed the older girl's mother. They had well-to-do homes and were described as highly intelligent; the murder was the culmination of a daydream-world, sex-heated friendship which the mother had threatened to end. The trial revolved round a diary, which recounted their extravagant fantasies and their amorous experiments; they were "insane, incurable and certifiable," said the defence, "dirty-minded and incurably bad," said the prosecution. After six days' trial, the girls were found guilty and, too young for the gallows, sentenced to be detained indefinitely.

It is horrifying enough that two adolescents, through belief in a manufactured world of ideas, should kill another human being in cold blood. But a good deal of the revulsion aroused by murders is in the nature of a conditioned response; for those who are unsure of the amount of horror required, the Press provides helpful guides in the form of denunciatory comments. There is not much indignation over adolescent boys being trained to kill; a particularly lethal air-gunner of 18 is more likely to be decorated than declared either mad or bad, until his own turn comes and they wash him out of the turret with a hose. The writer recalls, too, seeing a war-time booklet on unarmed combat for 15-year-old Boy Scouts and reading what can be done with the rim of a steel helmet. On balance, it seems almost to the diarist's credit that she felt "very keyed up" the night before the murder.

Paranoia is the clinical name for the alleged condition of mind of the two girls; it is a form of insanity characterized by delusions of grandeur, persecution and so on. Many of the things tut-tutted over in the reports were not paranoiac at all, of course: plenty of schoolgirls—and schoolboys—keep lurid diaries, create fantasy-worlds and make sexual explorations. The most interesting thing about paranoia is that it can lead to glory as well as the condemned cell. All that was said about these girls can equally be said of some of the most illustrious.

For example, Cornelius Vanderbilt, who according to a magazine article was "... libidinous as a goat and meaner than a spider ... he believed wholeheartedly in witchcraft, magic, spells, the whole bag of tricks, and more than once employed 'necromancers' to make wax images of his Wall Street enemies."

There is the case, too, of Salvador Dali ("avida dollars," a Spanish anagrammist called him—"avida" meaning "he's hungry for them.") His autobiography is a lot more surprising than the reports of the Christ-church trial. As well as art, it brings in putrefaction, cruelty and coprophilia and accounts of his solitary sexual acts, his morbid fetishes and his desire to kill.

Journalists are free with the word "paranoiac" when writing up Dali; George Orwell in "Benefit of Clergy," commented shrewdly enough on the peculiarities which have made him a lion and a wealthy one, too.

Mental conditions like the one in question can and do lead to inhuman and anti-social acts. It is all too easy, however, to shout: "Paranoiacs! Lock 'em away!" and overlook the honour which society accords to other paranoiacs. Easier still, to forget—or not to know at all—that even anti-social actions have social causes, and to believe that some people are simply "incurably bad." Let us dispose of that last piece of nonsense before going any farther. Leave out "bad"—it can be "good," according to the time and the place and the morality; apart from some who have diseased or disordered brains, there are no incorrigibly anti-social people.

Man is a social being, tending always towards co-operation and order. Each man is dependent on other men for existence, for the satisfaction of his physical needs, and his emotional and mental ones, too (it has been suggested that even his fear of death is the fear of isolation); he has an interest in good relationships with his fellow-men. The human concord that is claimed as the heart of almost every religion and philosophy in the world is no more, and no less, than what human beings have tried to attain from the beginnings of social life. It is true that the property structures man has erected in his social development have continually frustrated his striving; the fact of the striving remains. All men are social by nature—that is, by the fact of being men.

There is a good deal to be said about the disordered brains, too. The incidence and causes of mental deficiency were investigated by the Wood Committee in 1929 and the Departmental Committee on Sterilization in 1933. Their strongest conclusion was that environment—poverty, ignorance, bad conditions—had more than anything else to do with producing minds "incapable of independent social adaptation." It seems obvious that a feeble-minded person cannot be called anti-social, even though he lacks responsibility; it is truer that society has not much use for the feeble-minded, because they are "inefficient."

Mental disorder is a different thing from mental deficiency—it happens much more frequently, too. Modern living creates a host of anxieties, tensions and frustrations (including, in fact, the frustration of man's social instinct). That is why mental and nervous disorders have spread so rapidly in recent years; it is also why the chief task of psychologists is to alter (if they can) the immediate circumstances which have led to strain. Mental disorders are curable, in the sense of treating and relieving individual cases; in the wider social sense they are not being cured at all because their causes are intensifying.

Anti-social behaviour, when it is not the product of a disordered brain, is the reaction of a person to a situation.

Not everybody has the same reaction because the circumstances that shape behaviour are not exactly the same in all of us; whatever the reaction, however, it is something learned from society. Jealousy and its resultant crimes can only happen in an environment where possession is important; malice, only where society engenders conflict. The social body, indignant over somebody's wickedness, is too often Caliban enraged with his own face in the glass. The two girls in New Zealand were said to be morbidly obsessed with sex: has anybody enquired the state of mind of the people who packed the court to hear, or crowded the street for a glimpse of their faces?

There is no more virtue in whitewashing crimes than in condemning them. The important thing is to see them in the right perspective, understanding why such things happen to people. Some crimes are directly economic, because anything is done for money—and has to be—in our world; men and women steal, cheat and kill because they need it or think they do. The matter is not always so simple; more often crime involves emotions which are the responses of people, as society has made them, to situations, in which society has put them. Even the hard-boiled criminals—where are they boiled so hard but in the racist social stewpan? The logical answer is to establish a social situation which does not promote anti-social reactions. Marx put it best by speaking of "human society" instead of "civil society."

The environmental nature of crime is recognized to quite a large extent by those who deal with it (leaving out Justices of the Peace, who are required to have no knowledge at all of what they are dealing with). The reports of counsels' speeches in the *News of the World* show that plenty of them are aware that a prisoner's life history—his education, housing, wages, health—stands with him in the dock. The fact remains that the treatment of criminals is based mainly on retribution. The only example of an organized attempt at rehabilitation is the Borstal training of young offenders, which has a certain amount of success—because youth is easily moulded—in disciplining them to society's requirements.

More humane and rational attitudes to many things have become established since the days of public hangings. Nevertheless, most people still accept that it is right or necessary to inflict retributive punishment on those who break the laws. The popular Press, which butters up public opinion so as to guide it all the more firmly, supports the view that retribution is the only socially practicable answer. Probably under this system it is—even though it doesn't really work: the main effect of prolonged or repeated imprisonment is to make its victim unfit for any life except one of crime. It is worth remarking also that punishment degrades those who inflict it, as well as those at the receiving end.

It is true that there has been talk at various times about reforming the criminal law to "humanize" it and provide that unfortunates like the two schoolgirls should be rehabilitated instead of punished. The sentiment is admirable, but most of those who want to rehabilitate criminals never question the sort of world into which they would be rehabilitated. And many of them—presumably, at any rate—object to retribution for crime but agree to it when it is the motive for war.

Why are there crime and delinquency, and the states of mind which lead to them? Crimes against property and its coercive morality are inevitable while private property exists; crimes against people, too, are part of an

unhealthy condition of society. There can be little solution of these problems in the social order which breeds them: "human society" is the only real answer. Pauline Parker and Juliet Hulme may have been mad or just

malicious. Either way, the diagnosis is of the world of which they are part, and underlines the need for speedy, efficient cure.

R. COSTER.

PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE

OUR plans in Asia?" said Lenin on 18th February, 1920, to a correspondent of the *New York Evening Journal*, "Our plans in Asia? The same as in Europe: peaceful co-existence..." Thirty-four years later, after a hot war which entailed the refrigeration of the plans the Soviet leaders echo their predecessors' words. On the face of it they should succeed this time, for they have powerful and influential echoes in Eisenhower and Churchill.

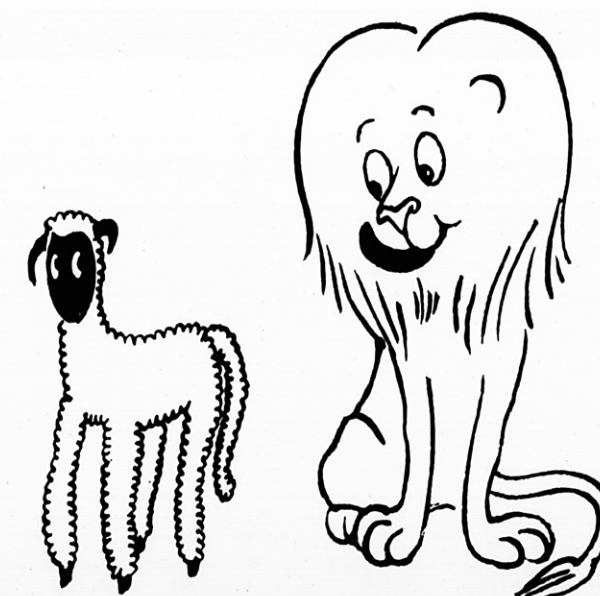
Churchill, speaking in the Commons about his recent visit to North America, said in reference to peaceful co-existence: "This far-reaching conception certainly had its part in some of our conversations at Washington. I was glad when I read after we had left that President Eisenhower had said that the hope of the world lies in peaceful co-existence." (*Daily Telegraph*, 13/7/54.) Earlier, on 29/6/54, Churchill and Eisenhower, in a signed declaration known to some as the Potomac Charter, had stated that they would "together and individually, continue to hold out the hand of friendship to any and all nations, which by solemn pledge and confirming deeds, show themselves desirous of participating in a just and fair peace."

It would seem that the Big Three share a basic desire, peaceful co-existence, and the time has come for detailed discussion and co-operative action. But what is the substance of their "co-existence"; what are the confirming deeds that distinguish the nations desirous of a just and fair peace; what is this peace, just and fair?

These are legitimate questions. Churchill, talking in the Commons about the Potomac Charter referred to the "necessarily general and sometimes vague character" of its declarations. "The expression of broad and simple principles likely to command assent and not excite the dissent of vast communities must necessarily be in guarded terms." (*Daily Telegraph*, 13/7/54.) Those are words typical of statesmen, men who know the world, who know "it would not be in the public interest" if a "detailed statement" about discussions and decisions affecting millions of people was made to those millions. All the more important is it then that we examine their broad and simple principles.

In the so-called Western world the idea has been fostered that there are now two kinds of human society in being, the Freedom-loving peoples and Communism. In the Russian "sphere" the same idea has been built up, but the terms are different: "Socialism or the lasting-peace-loving peoples on the one hand, and Capitalist Imperialism on the other."

The idea is fallacious. The mass of people on both sides desire peace and freedom from the tribulations which they suffer jointly and in common. Far from either side exhibiting the symptoms of Socialist or Communist society,



both practise capitalism. In principle, they have the same way of life, the same ideology. Their politicians and generals speak the same language, even to the very phrase.

The signatories to the Potomac Charter "believe that the cause of world peace would be advanced by... drastic reduction... of world armaments..." They have resolved to "maintain the... military strength necessary to pursue [their] purposes effectively..." In pursuit of this... we will seek every means of promoting the fuller and freer interchange among us of goods and services which will benefit all participants." (*Daily Telegraph*, 30/6/54.) Can you not hear Malenkov repeating Stalin's 1939 words: "We stand for peace and the strengthening of business relations with all countries... as long as they make no attempt to trespass on the interests of our country."

Bertrand Russell, whom we are told is a great thinker rather than a great statesman, has also given us his views on peace, in an article entitled "The Most Hopeful Road to Peace" (*Picture Post*, 24/7/54). Although he also relies on hope, as befits a thinker he goes further than Churchill, Malenkov and Co., and makes some proposals. As he sees it, there will have to be three stages to the establishment of a lasting peace. First, there must be a diminution of mutual suspicion; brought about by "eminent Indians... drawing up a carefully reasoned report as to the probable consequences of a World War with modern weapons"; if various governments would then signify their "acquiescence in the proposition that no Great Power can hope to achieve any of its purposes by World War" then "various governments might become persuaded that they have no reason to fear a sudden unprovoked attack." (Our italics.)

Although there is much here to comment on, note how, in the modern fashion, he proposes that governments, all eminent men, are to be influenced by other eminent men. He ignores you and me. Quite right, too; after all we know the actual results of world war with modern weapons.

When tension has been reduced, Russell then wants conversations with a view to finding some compromise

about a definite delimitation of spheres neither repugnant nor unfavourable to either side; meaning, peaceful co-existence. But as he says, "At present, each side is willing to take—but not . . . to give."

The Russell plan concludes with a treaty, of course; and a World Authority, possessing a monopoly of all "the more important weapons of war," which would be concerned "only with what is necessary for the preservation of peace. It should not interfere with the internal affairs of nations." With peaceful co-existence so established only "small and brief" wars will be possible and "Men (presumably including wage-earners) will enter upon a period of happiness. . . ."

If governments were to attempt to clarify their "broad and simple principles" on peaceful co-existence they would have to follow a Russell-like plan.

The present major division in the world is a result, not of different beliefs, but of the second world war, which left Russia and America as the two biggest competitors in a world of competitors; each and all determined to hold and expand what it has. That is the background to disarmament, re-armament, and just plain armament. But the manufacture of arms is a costly, and on the whole unprofitable, business; except in wartime no government dare export such commodities on any significant scale. Further, it may be, since they have the facts, that even the rulers are a little disturbed about the hydrogen bomb; and it can be said of all governments that they do not want war, but the fruits of war.

There are good reasons then for an international search for what they call a formula and "peaceful co-existence" is a good starting-point. The slogan embraces the dream of a world of buying and selling, of politics and power, of competition and spheres of influence, without war and not too many armaments. It envisages the retention of capital exploiting wage-labour, of poverty and welfare, of governments and governed, of nations and signed declarations of friendship. Hence co-existence.

And if things once again go wrong, if the dream turns into a nightmare, well, as Lenin said in 1920, the obstacles to agreement are on the other side.

"Peaceful co-existence" panders to the ignorant and unthinking, but the expression by professional great men of the hopes of millions of small men will not solve problems; will not bring about a state of affairs wherein war is not merely impossible but unthought of; will not bring about conditions, to quote the Potomac Charter, "in which the prodigious nuclear forces now in human hands can be used to enrich and not to destroy mankind"; will not bring about a community where, not Russian and American soldiers co-exist and occasionally work together to meet nature's floods, but where men and women of all languages and colours dwell in practical cooperative harmony, every day.

Action, not hope, is required. The action of the wage-earners, the world's small men.

D. S. C.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Our Anniversary Number. Owing to the difficulties in the course of preparation our special anniversary number for September was much delayed. We regret the inconvenience caused to readers. Copies are now available, 32 pages, Price 4d. (Post free 5½d.) Readers are again invited to send donations to cover the large additional expenditure incurred for the special issue.

The Autumn Delegate Meeting will be held on Saturday and Sunday, November 6th and 7th, at DENISON HOUSE, VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD (Victoria Station), 10.30 to 5.30 p.m. each day. Will members please make a note of the venue and times, particularly as the meeting is not being held at the same hall as previously. A Social will be held on the Saturday evening from 7.30 p.m., at Head Office—all welcome.

Fulham Branch is commencing a series of lectures and discussions to be held alternate Thursdays from October 7th. Members, sympathisers, and readers of the SOCIALIST STANDARD are cordially invited. The Lectures and discussions will be held at 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, and will commence at 8 p.m. Details of subjects are given elsewhere in this issue.

Successful outdoor meetings have been held by the Branch at Earls Court and at Gloucester Road. The number of meetings unfortunately has not been so many this year due to the bad weather.

The Overseas Secretary reports:—From Victoria, British Columbia, an old comrade sent us this, with an enclosure: "Taking note of your appeal for funds for the commemorative number, we have made a collection

from the remaining few old timers in the movement residing in Victoria. Every one is now on the scrap heap, but all agreed it would be proper for us, too, to celebrate by sending you along £4 10s., or 12s., according to the exchange rate when I reach the Post Office, and would like to wish you all the success possible. . . . Yours for Socialism, C. Luff."

The same letter informs us of the death of Comrade Olsen, of Vancouver, who was killed in a motor accident while on holiday in July. He was only 26, but was, in our correspondent's words, "a tower of strength to that Local." Our sympathies go to his relations and his comrades.

Head Office Lectures. A series of Sunday evening lectures at 52, Clapham High Street are being held. Time 8 p.m. The first is on October 10th. Will members help to make these meetings well attended by giving details to S.S. readers, sympathisers, and to members who cannot always get along to their branches. The first list of titles are topical and should provide a good opportunity for discussions. Please make a note, the first meeting is on SUNDAY, 10th. OCTOBER, at 8 p.m.

Treetops Week-end. A very enjoyable week-end was spent at Treetops on September 11/12th. Discussions were led by Freddie Clark and Billy Iles on the Party's present ideas and future. Another week-end has been arranged for October 30th/31st. Those desiring to attend must reserve accommodation by writing direct to Mrs. Plant, Treetops Holiday Camp, Farley Green, near Guildford.

P. H.

McCARTHYISM

OUR Comrades of the World Socialist Party of the United States received an inquiry from a group of Liberals in London about McCarthyism. The following is an extract from the reply which will be of interest to readers of the S.S.

Dear Sir:

The National Administrative Committee at its latest meeting noted your communication of July 14th, and has designated me to furnish a reply.

First off, it must be difficult for European workers to understand the persecution and prosecution in the United States of not only the Communist Party, but also of those whose only crime was to participate in Communist Party "front" organizations.

Of course, as Marxists, we do not employ the term Left and Right to describe political parties, but use the terms Socialist, non-Socialist, and Capitalist, even though in popular parlance the former may slip out.

We know that in European countries the Communist Party members have occupied, and continue to occupy, seats in the government, especially in Italy and France. Even in England two Communist Party members at one time were Members of Parliament. Communist Party members are employed in government services, although we understand that in England they are restricted in their work.

In answer to your first point, it is absolutely true that an American citizen is in jeopardy of his job if he has at one time or another joined the Communist Party. This has been extended from governmental services, through union offices, through the universities and schools, down to the shops themselves, where a group of five or six alleged Communist Party members were thrown out of the Buick plant in Flint, and the union involved (United Auto Workers—CIO) made only a token and unsuccessful gesture in their defence.

During the 1930's many young men and women joined the Communist Party out of sheer desperation because of the tremendous unemployment, especially among the intellectuals who were pushed on to public works at low wages. After the "recovery" owing to the Second World War, these same people obtain positions in the government, in the unions, in the universities and lower grade schools. Many had dropped out of the Communist Party after a few months, and some had not even obtained membership cards, but now their past is being excavated, and they are being removed from their posts.

Guilt by association, as well as actual membership in the C.P., has been a device utilized to prosecute professors, government workers, among others. If one had associated in the past with known members of the Communist Party, or if one were unfortunate enough to marry a member, even though he were not a member himself, he would be subject to losing his employment.

This prosecution has extended to membership in "front" organizations, which many innocent, and not-so-innocent citizens joined under the assumption they were aiding Spanish refugees, the foreign-born, etc., whereas in reality these organizations were used as "feeders"—ideological and financial—into the Communist Party.

Where union officials have co-operated or worked together with known Communist Party members, they too have lost their positions, either by the unfavourable propaganda resulting in their defeats in election, or their out-



right removal by top leaders of the union.

The Progressive Party has been characterized by the government as a Communist Party front because of its support of the Soviet Union, condemnation of American Imperialism, etc., and those in this organization have been declared suspect. However, to date we cannot recall off-hand any being deprived of their positions by virtue of membership in this group.

Beyond this we will not go. To state that membership in such a group as the Americans for Democratic Action, a dissident group in the Democratic Party (we will not use the term "left") or to other such "Liberals" would result in loss of one's job would be incorrect. However, this has not stopped McCarthy and the rest of his ilk from throwing charges of "Socialist" and "Communist" at these people. As a matter of fact, such groups as the ADA are trying to out anti-communist McCarthy, and the debate goes on as to which group is fighting Communism the hardest.

No, this campaign against intellectual freedom has not been exaggerated in the European Press, but to present the evidence of this would take several books. Those who have lived in Europe all their lives are amazed at the crusade against freedom of speech in the United States. They even have a new term, "controversial figure." That is, even if one has a clear record in the past, if someone on the

school board or even a parent is in doubt as to this person's loyalty and can cause dissension over it, then this teacher or superintendent is a "controversial figure," and is forthwith removed.

The most lamentable and ludicrous of all are the prosecutions against those who use the first (freedom of speech) and fifth (prohibition against testifying against one's self) amendment of the American Constitution. Although I cannot prove my statement, it is my belief that many professors are going down to defeat—losing their jobs—merely because they refuse to testify against others, or be what we call "stool-pigeons," and not because of membership in the Communist Party. Under the law, as soon as one begins to testify, then he must answer every question or suffer contempt of court proceedings, which land him in jail. Rather than take a chance on being forced to give damaging testimony against another associate, these professors have refused to testify at all, have been suspended and ultimately discharged from their posts, or have even gone to the penitentiary for contempt of court. To be sure, many who have been members of the Communist Party have invoked the two amendments as well.

The proceedings before Senate investigating committees are properly called "star chamber proceedings." The individuals can do nothing but answer questions, and be confronted by witnesses whom they cannot question in rebuttal. As soon as the accused individual attempts to read a statement the Senators do not like, he is evicted from the hearing, and if the individual is foolish enough to persist in his freedom of speech, then he is charged with contempt of court, which can result in six months in prison for each contempt. Phillip Wylie, an outstanding American writer and by no means a Socialist, recently stated the matter correctly when he said that intellectual freedom has been destroyed in the United States, and that the only freedom which remains is political, that is, the right to vote.

Even this is being taken away *tout de suite*, as a bill is now in Congress to deprive the Communist Party of legal status, so that anyone will not be able to vote for the Communist Party candidates, even if he foolishly wished to do so. It goes faster. To get on the ballot here in Michigan, for example, the party must receive a certain percentage of the vote. Failure to do so requires this party to take up petitions and to obtain a specific number of names of registered voters before it can be placed on the ballot. But here is the rub. The subversive squad of the State Police took these lists circulated by the Communists, Trotskyists, Socialist Labour Party, and have placed every signer of the petitions under suspect, subject to later investigation.

I would like to go into this deeper, because above we have presented only surface manifestations. Why, for example, can McCarthy get away with his Hitler-like tactics of the "big lie," the "constant repetition," the insinuations, etc.? Why does Eisenhower skirt around McCarthy on many occasions, and why is the committee now set up to investigate McCarthy going to delay its report until sometime in January, after the November elections for Congress?

Whether we like it or not, McCarthy has a lot of support, not only among the Texas millionaires, and many other capitalists, but even from rank and file workers. Of course, the Catholic Church has its hand in this Red hunt, in spite of public pronouncements against persecution of free thought, etc., etc., *ad nauseam*. One would be surprised to go among the workers and see how many applaud

McCarthy's efforts. In his home state of Wisconsin, McCarthy won with the votes of the heavily industrialized areas. Thus Republicans and Democrats alike seeking office, are rather slow in doing anything against McCarthy, although they condemn him demagogically for public consumption. As an aside, it should be pointed out that McCarthy has a little black book (forbid that word "red"!) in which it is stated what Congressman had what woman in what hotel, etc., etc., *ad hominem*, plus all the scandals of their past life. McCarthy even now is digging up one on Senator Fullbright, his opponent.

Thus, McCarthy has support from one quarter or another. It may not be a majority support, but it is nevertheless a minority with which to reckon.

An even deeper question poses itself, and on this we would like to spend a bit of your reading time. The United States has not only supposedly, but actually, the strongest economy in the world, that is, in terms of industrial output, productivity, and so forth. European countries, on the other hand, are weaker in their economies, and depend on the American dollar in many ways to buttress their ships of state. Would not it be logical, then, to suppose that political and intellectual freedom would be greater in a stronger economy which has nothing to fear from its critics, and less in a weak economy? After all, when one has lots of money in his pockets, he can afford to be more generous. Take the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, and all the rest of the political parties "of the working class," and their total membership would not be over 400,000, so that their sympathetic following would not be half a million. None of these parties have a representative in Congress, and as far as we know not even a member in the state legislatures, although the Social Democrats may have a city councilman or Mayor here or there.

This seeming contradiction in American capitalism prosecuting minority groups is explained by the economics of the situation. The American economy may appear strong from the outside looking in, but internally it is very weak, in that much of the "prosperity" is based on probabilities, on the hot and cold war situation, etc. All one hears over here from the workers is the fear of another depression. Thus, the persecution of minority "radical groups" is not against them as such, but at the possibility of an economic collapse which would permit these groups to agitate among the workers and make headway. The American worker is "war-prosperity" conscious, that is, he does not believe prosperity can exist without a war.

Another factor also, intervenes, and that is the fear of Communist Party sabotage in the event of a global war with Russia. This occupies an important part in the thinking of the American ruling class which tracks down Communist Party members through their police and political frontmen. Right now, of the two factors—the fear of an economic collapse and danger of a war with Russia—I should judge the latter to have a slight predominance, and this would account for the prosecution of the Communist Party on the one hand, and the only mild backhand sweeps at other political organizations of the working class. But since the authorities do not make a neat distinction between Russian state Capitalism and Socialism, when one or both factors named above reach a more advanced state, one can expect the blow to fall on all quarters, political groupings opposed to the Russian system, as well as those in support.

KARL FREDERICK.

Backwaters of History (II)

THE TOLPUDDLE MARTYRS

THE parish constable of the little village of Tolpuddle in Dorsetshire had a most embarrassing and distasteful task to perform. He had to arrest his friend and neighbour George Loveless. It was just breaking day on a cold February morning in 1834 when the constable accosted Loveless, who had just left his home on his way to work, and took him round the village to collect five others, James Hammett, young James Brine, Thomas Standfield and his son John, and George Loveless's brother James. The warrant for the arrest of these six farm labourers charged them with having participated in the administration of an illegal oath. The constable, having gathered them all together, marched them seven miles into Dorchester, where they were brought in front of the local magistrates, Mr. C. B. Wollaston and Mr. James Frampton, who committed them to prison. They were stripped, searched, their heads were shaven and they were thrown like criminals into Dorchester gaol.

Since the beginning of the century the wages and conditions of the agricultural workers had been getting steadily worse. Prices had risen during the Napoleonic wars without a corresponding raise in wages. The enclosures taking place, together with new methods of farming, were reducing the demand for agricultural labour. Conditions became so bad that landowners and farmers were compelled to do something.

A group of 18 persons, including seven clergymen, met in the Pelican Inn at Speenhamland, Newbury, Berkshire, to discuss the situation. They decided that a fixed sum, based on an allowance of 26 lbs. of bread per week for a man and 13 lbs. for a wife and each child, should be accepted as a necessary weekly income for a labourer. If a man's wages were less than the sum fixed they were to be supplemented from the poor relief. This idea spread and became known as the Speenhamland system. It encouraged landowners and farmers to reduce wages and it caused local rates to increase alarmingly. Efforts to keep the rates from rising resulted in a lowering of the labourers' allowance so conditions got worse and worse.

Ever since Waterloo the half starved rural workers had, on occasions and in different places, rioted and indulged in some hay rick burning. In 1830 there was general excitement throughout the country and the rural workers in Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, Wiltshire, East Anglia, and some other counties, broke out into a general revolt. All over southern England workers met and organised themselves into bands under leaders elected on the spot. The bands marched out to destroy threshing machines, burn hay ricks, take over the control of villages, demand the payment of higher wages and the remission



of tithes and rents. In some districts the local overseer was taken for a ride in a manure cart and tipped into the village pond. In the whole of the revolt the labourers neither killed nor wounded one single person.

The newly elected Whig Government, with Lord Melbourne at the Home Office, responded to the urgent and frantic demands of the landowners and sent troops to the affected area to stamp out the revolt. The unarmed labourers had not the power to even attempt to resist. Nine were hanged, 457 were transported and about 400 sentenced to varying periods of imprisonment.

Henry Cook, of Micheldever in Hampshire, a youth of 19, was amongst those hanged his crime being that he had struck a well known financier named Bingham Baring, and damaged his hat. Yet, despite the savagery of the suppression of the revolt, it did not stamp out the secret and sporadic rick burning and machine smashing.

In practically all parts of Dorsetshire agricultural workers received a wage of 10s. a week. At Tolpuddle the wages were only 9s. a week, but when the Tolpuddle landowners were approached by George Loveless on behalf of the local labourers, they agreed to a raise to 10s. This agreement was never kept, in fact, a reduction to 8s. was imposed. The labourers appealed to the justices without success and the landowners took revenge by a further reduction to 7s., with a threat to go as low as 6s. if the men were recalcitrant.

Industrial workers in Britain were suffering in a similar manner to their rural colleagues. Wages were kept down in the face of rising prices. The workers' inclination to organise to resist this worsening condition was subdued by the hated Combination Acts. A few illegal organisations were formed but when the Combination Acts were repealed in 1825, Trade Unions, Benefit Societies, and all forms of working class associations, sprang up in profusion.

Early in October, 1833, a national conference of Trade Unions, Co-operative Societies and Benefit Societies, was held in London and here, Robert Owen proposed the formation of a 'Grand National Moral Union of the Productive Classes of Great Britain and Ireland.' A start was made and another conference held in Robert Owen's London Institute, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, early in February, 1834, drew up a constitution and adopted the

(Continued on page 137)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

NEWS ABOUT MILLIONAIRES

THE number of very wealthy people in Britain, including millionaires, is well below what it was before the war but it appears to be picking up again now. This, at least, is the conclusion of Mr. Marshall Pugh writing in the *Sunday Chronicle* (5/9/54). He has provided himself—at a cost of ten guineas—with a published list giving an estimate of the present number of millionaires and he finds it to be 50. A list similarly compiled in 1946 gave only 28. Mr. Pugh concludes that "Britain is slowly recovering from her post-war shortage of millionaires." He doubts if the list is complete and adds a few likely names. This doubt about the exact number is not surprising because there is no record of millionaires published by the Inland Revenue authorities, though they must certainly have a good idea how many there are.

There is, however, official information in Inland Revenue Reports about the numbers of people in various ranges of income. In 1938-9 there were 99 people, each with an income (before being taxed) of over £100,000 a year. By 1950-51 the number had fallen to 38; and the number of persons who had more than £6,000 left to spend, after paying tax, had fallen from 6,600 in 1938-9 to about 500 in 1950-51. The fall in the number and size of very big incomes is exactly what was to be expected. Contrary to the muddled view held by those who have never understood what capitalism is and how it works capitalism's wars are paid for by the only class that can pay—the capitalists. The destruction of capitalist property and loss of overseas investments fell on the British capitalists, but now that war-time destruction has been made good accumulation is going ahead once more and we may

expect to see a change some way towards the pre-war pattern again.

This will surprise those who have swallowed the nonsense about poverty having been abolished under the so-called Welfare State. Apart from an unusually long period with unemployment at a very low figure nothing has happened since the war to change materially the structure of capitalism. Neither the Labour Government's social reforms nor its Nationalisation schemes have touched the permanent capitalist inequalities of income and capital. It is still true, as it was in 1918, when the Labour Party plugged it in its election address that about 90 per cent. of the accumulated wealth of the country is owned by a 10th of the population. Yet we have the fatuous organ of Mr. Bevan, *Tribune*, in its issue for 2 July, 1954, publishing some figures about "the flagrant contrast between poverty and wealth in Britain," and calling them "discoveries!" *Tribune's* comment is that these "appalling facts" "will shock those who believe that the welfare state has eliminated poverty in Britain—or that there is no case for a drastic redistribution of wealth."

Of course outstanding among those who deceived the workers into believing that the welfare state would abolish or had abolished poverty are the people who run *Tribune*.

And now that *Tribune*—about a century and a half late—has discovered that under capitalism there is flagrant contrast between poverty and wealth in Britain, their remedy is to seek redistribution of wealth. Socialists, of course, are not seeking anything of the kind. Trying to seek redistribution of wealth under capitalism merely perpetuates the notion that capitalism would be all right if there were fewer millionaires and more capitalists with investments of a moderate size. But this, assuming for the sake of argument that it could be achieved, would not at all remove the evils of capitalism. It is a matter of no concern at all to the cow whether she is milked to make profit for a farmer, a co-operative society or a millionaire dairy combine. The worker, if he understood his own interest, would perceive that capitalism is a system that functions by milking him for the benefit of the capitalist class and it is not his worry if some capitalists swallow up others and produce millionaires. Their multiplication or their elimination will make no difference to him. It is not the redistribution of the property of the capitalists that will solve the workers' problems but the abolition of capitalism.

Tribune, however, knows of other "solutions" of the poverty problem for in September a contributor, Mr. Ian Mikardo, went to Hungary and made the discovery that "there's very little real poverty in Red Hungary." But there must be a catch in that word "real" for he also discovered that the Hungarian workers' living standards "are about 30 per cent. below ours, even when one allows for a very much higher 'social wage' than we have in Great Britain." (*Tribune* 17th September 1954.)

It is all rather confusing. The poverty in Britain, says the *Tribune* is appalling in spite of the "welfare state"; and in Hungary living standards are 30 per cent. lower than in Britain in spite of having an even better welfare state ("social wage"); but nevertheless they are not "really" poor.

In the meantime here is a comforting thought about millionaires and the way they spend their money, from Noel Barber's column in the *Daily Mail* (11 Sept., 1954).

"Being—like all millionaires—a true lover of the arts. Onassis, the uncrowned king, Monte Carlo recently commissioned the French artist Verges to do four big murals for the spacious saloon of his big new yacht."

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY—continued from page 135

title, "Grand National Consolidated Trade Union." Within a few weeks of launching, this "One Big Union" was boasting a membership of half a million.

Robert Owen had ideas for using this Union to achieve a co-operative commonwealth but most of the delegates to the conference were concerned with fighting for better wages and shorter working hours. Rule XLVI of the G.N.C.T.U. reads:

"Although the design of the Union is, in the first instance, to raise the wages of the workmen, or prevent any further reduction therein, and to diminish the hours of labour, the great and ultimate object of it must be to establish the paramount rights of Industry and Humanity, by . . . bringing about A DIFFERENT ORDER OF THINGS, in which the really useful and intelligent parts of society only shall have the direction of its affairs."

(Quoted by Allen Hutt in *British Trade Unionism*, page 18.)

The G.N.C.T.U. was formed by federating a number of national trades unions most of which were organised into local lodges or branches. There were shop-assistants and journeymen chimneysweeps; Ploughmen's Unions and Shearmen's Unions; the Grand Lodge of Operative Bonnet Makers; the Lodge of Female Tailors and the "Ancient Virgins"; carpenters, brewers, bricklayers, engineers, calico printers, cabinet makers, spinners, weavers, dyers, pottery workers, and, to remind us of London's rural surroundings, a union of the agricultural labourers of Kensington, Walham Green, Fulham and Hammersmith.

It is not a matter of surprise that the idea of forming a union percolated to the quiet little village of Tolpuddle. George and James Loveless got in touch with men who were propagating the "One Big Union" idea and then set about forming a Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers. In the days when such organisations were illegal an elaborate system of initiation ceremonies had grown up, with handgrips, signs, blindfolding of initiates and swearing of oaths. Although this process of making the society a "mystery" was no longer necessary, it had become customary and was still widely adopted. In consequence, the Tolpuddle workers ordered a large size painting of a skeleton, obtained a Bible and a white sheet and took a room in the cottage of Thomas Stanfield for their Union meetings.

A rule book was prepared in which it was stated that the entrance fee was 1s. and contributions 1d. a week. There was to be no obscenity, and no political or religious subjects were to be discussed during lodge hours. Members were bound not to strike for more pay without the consent of the Grand Lodge but if a master reduced pay they must all walk off together after finishing the work in hand. Everyone was pledged to cease work in support of any member who was victimised for his Union membership. Rule 23 shows the views of the founders:

"The object of this society can never be promoted by any act or acts of violence, but, on the contrary, all such proceedings must tend to hinder the cause and destroy the society itself. This Order will not countenance any violation of the laws." (Quoted in *The Martyrs of Tolpuddle* published by the T.U.C. page 23.)

The growth of trade unionism throughout the country, together with a recognition of the power of a nation wide union of all workers, caused a panic amongst the employers. A number of fierce and violent strikes in London, Oldham and the Potteries, added to their fears. The landowners and farmers around Tolpuddle were going to take no chances; they intended to suppress trade

unionism. The justices of the Dorchester Division of the County of Dorset issued a proclamation threatening those who induced others to join unions with transportation for seven years for committing a felony.

During December, 1833, the Tolpuddle trade unionists admitted to membership of their lodge two men, John Lock and Edward Legg. These two turned out to be informers and, on the basis of their statements, the six Dorchester labourers were arrested. They were imprisoned till Saturday, March 6th., when they were removed to the County Hall for the trial which lasted four days. They were charged under the Mutiny Act, 37 of George III., cap. 7, with administering an illegal oath. This Act was passed in 1797 to deal with the naval mutinies at The Nore and had no relation to legal trade union organisation. The indictment was prepared by Sergeant Wilde, M.P., who stated later that he was entrusted with the job of conducting the prosecutions instituted by the Government on that circuit.

The whole trial was a travesty. The justices were local landowners and employers with outspoken prejudices against the accused; the jurymen were fearful for their livelihood; the judge put words into the mouths of witnesses. The six men, who conducted themselves courageously, were sentenced to seven years transportation and within a week were packed off in convict ships to Botany's Bay and Van Diemen's Land. Their sufferings on the ships and in the convict settlements of Australia and Tasmania are a story in themselves.

The brutality of this sentence and the new problem it caused for the Trade Unions, gave rise to a storm of protest. The G.N.C.T.U. organised the largest of a series of demonstrations. On Monday, April 21st, 1834, at 7 o'clock in the morning workers began to gather in Copenhagen Fields (behind the present site of King's Cross Station), in preparation for the march. The numbers have been variously estimated at from 100,000 to 200,000. A petition to the King, requesting the granting of a pardon to the Tolpuddle men, signed by a quarter of a million people, was carried by 12 trade unionists and the monster procession, organised behind the banners and flags of its many societies, moved off. Through Guildford Street and Tottenham Court Road, around the West End of London to Whitehall, it wended its way. Whilst the petition was being presented to the Home Secretary, Lord Melbourne, who refused it, the main part of the procession went on to the Elephant and Castle and Kensington Common, where it dispersed at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Agitation for a pardon for the Tolpuddle labourers spread far and wide during the next two years. As trade unions were realised to be less harmful to the interests of employers than had at first been anticipated and, as mass demonstrations appeared to some people to be a potential threat to property, the Government finally relented and on March 6th, 1836, the King signed a pardon. It was another two years before the Dorchester men arrived back in England. Out of funds provided mainly by trade unionists they were presented with farms at Greensted Green, near Chipping Ongar, in Essex, and eventually they emigrated to Canada.

The Grand National Consolidated Trade Union had a short life. Strikes were many and violent, but the employers, helped by the Government, resisted stubbornly and, after a number of set-backs, the workers lost heart and membership of the G.N.C.T.U. fell away.

Finally it refused to sanction strikes and passed out of existence before the end of 1834.

There are still men who think, as did some of the founders of the Grand National, that by industrial organisation the workers can achieve a revolutionary social change. Events in England during the decade, 1830—1840, provide a few examples out of many to show

that whilst political power is in the hands of the ruling class, the subject class can do little more than squirm.

Bibliography—*The Martyrs of Tolpuddle*, published by the T.U.C.; *The Tolpuddle Martyrs*, by M. Firth and A. Hopkinson; *The Village Labourer*, by J. L. and B. Hammond; *History of Trade Unionism*, by S. and B. Webb; *Trials of British Freedom*, by T. A. Jackson. W. WATERS.

THE ECONOMICS OF CAPITALISM

(Continued from August issue)

THE whole of the labour of society is engaged in producing the whole social product, but not in accordance with a pre-determined social plan. Each producer works on his own account and does not know, until he tries to sell his product, whether or not he has kept in line with the average socially necessary labour criterion. If his product remains unsold he knows, too late, that he has failed. There is the further fact that society only requires commodities in appropriate proportions. For example, at a given time, there is a certain effective demand for bread, coats, and shoes, and labour employed in producing these commodities in excess of this demand is superfluous labour, and does not count in determining their values. As producers are working on their own account, producing commodities of different kinds with labour of different degrees of intensity, the common measure of value, that lies at the back of all kinds of skilled labour, is the labour that is the same in all human beings—just the expenditure of energy in its simplest form. The greater the skill involved in the work that is being done, the more of simple labour is compressed in an hour's employment of this labour, and the greater is the value produced in relation to what is produced by simple labour in the same time, even though the result may be a vastly increased product with a fall in the value of individual commodities.

The reduction of skilled labour to simple labour in the estimation of the value of a commodity is not done consciously by the producers but is accomplished behind their backs. An illustration may help to make this clear. If we turn back to the early history of mankind, to conditions of barter when articles were exchanged against articles, those who were making the exchanges within the communities did so on the rough basis of the work involved in each article. The products were such that one man could have made any of them himself, if he had the time, but it was more convenient for him to exchange his surplus of one article for his neighbours surplus of another. If his neighbour asked what he considered too much for an article then he would make it himself. The products were so few that the members of the community knew the time that would be involved in the production of each of them. Now let us transfer the idea to the present time. All kinds of companies and the like are engaged in the production of a variety of commodities, commodities so dissimilar as bread and fur coats. Money is invested in the production of these commodities for the purpose of making a profit out of doing so, and money flows into the most profitable channels. This flow of investment increases the production of the more profitable commodities until it is so far outstrips effective demand that the prices of them, and their

profitability, is reduced. The flow of investment then forsakes the production of the commodities whose profit capacity has declined and moves into more profitable productions. This ebb and flow of investment ensures that, in the long run, all the commodities produced by society sell at prices that are round about their values.

Now let us go a little further into the question of prices. Over a period the price of an article goes up and down, and these ups and downs are caused by the rise and fall of demand; that is to say when supply exceeds demand prices are low, and when demand exceeds supply prices are high—the black market has been a sufficient indication of that fact. The average of these ups and downs is round about the actual value of a commodity. There are those who argue that it is supply and demand, and not the quantity of labour required to produce it, that determines the value of a commodity. They overlook the fact that in the alternations between supply exceeding demand and demand exceeding supply there must be a period when supply and demand are equal and therefore cancel each other out. During that period the supply and demand theory cannot be the answer to the question of the value of a commodity. No amount of mathematical manipulation can get over this hurdle. Supply and demand as an explanation of value must be ruled out. At best it can only explain the fluctuations in prices but not the point about which they fluctuate.

When commodities are being exchanged through the medium of money value is being exchanged for value, but what really underlies the process is that the labour of one man or group of men is being exchanged for the labour of another man or group of men; there has been a social division of labour. For instance the labour of housebuilding has been exchanged for the labour of shoemaking; and so on. Thus value is really a social relation; a relation between people, between one man's labour and that of another; but this social relation between the labour of different people is expressed as a relation between the commodities they have produced; it is expressed when the latter appear on the market for sale. People have been producing articles for use all through history but they have only produced commodities, articles possessing value, where a system of exchange has come into operation. Further, it is only under a system of commodity production, the production of articles for the purpose of being exchanged, that value becomes one of the essential qualities of a product. As Marx puts it:

"Every product of labour is, in all states of society, a use-value; but it is only at a definite historical epoch in society's development that such a product becomes a com-

modity, viz. at the epoch when the labour spent upon the production of a useful article becomes expressed as one of the objective qualities of that article i.e., its value."

Thus with the abolition of commodity production value will also disappear. Articles will no longer be looked upon as having so much value but will only be appreciated according to their usefulness for consumption or enjoyment, and diamonds and furs will lose a good deal of their attraction. At the same time the mysterious nature of commodities will disappear: the mystery of money arises out of the relation of the individual producers to the total of their own products which appears to them as a social relation between the objects they produce.

There is one aspect of commodities which, unless it is understood, will leave room for confusion. Commodities are articles that are regularly produced for the market, therefore only those articles that are capable of constant reproduction are commodities. A genuine antique is not a commodity because it cannot be indefinitely reproduced; it is true it comes upon the market

and is sold and thus, although not a commodity, takes on a commodity character. Likewise honour takes on a commodity character when politicians sell their votes. In the huge productive output of to-day these are the comparatively odd things.

Finally, the labour of private individuals becomes labour directly social in its form owing to the fact that production is for the market; individual labour becomes an indistinguishable part of the general social labour. It is impossible to tell by looking at products as they appear on the market, what different portions of the world's population have taken part in their production; the raw materials may have been produced in India, China or Russia, the machinery in England, France or Germany, and the finished products in America, Japan, or Holland. They appear on the markets, local, national, and international, just as articles for sale produced by a portion of the general labour of society.

GILMAC.

(To be continued.)

HOW SOCIETY CHANGES

ANTHROPOLOGY has always been an interesting subject to Socialists. Morgan's *Ancient Society* and Engels' *Origin of the Family*, are only two of the books which have helped us to see how society has changed and developed in the past, and therefore gives us an indication of how it is likely to change in the future.

This process of change is very clearly shown in a report by Dr. Ralph Linton, Professor of Anthropology at Columbia University, which appears in the book "The Individual and His Society," by Kardiner and Linton.

The report derives from Linton's own field work among the Tanala and Betsileo tribes in the island of Madagascar, and relates how a simple change in the mode of production revolutionised a whole tribal society.

The Tanala

On a forested mountain plateau live the Tanala. They are an agricultural tribe, living mainly by rice cultivation. They grow the rice "dry"—that is, like an ordinary cereal. Only one or two crops can be raised on any one piece of land by the methods which they use; after that the land has to be allowed to grow up in jungle and left for ten to fifteen years.

At the beginning of the season the elders of the lineage arrange the heads of the families within that lineage along the edge of the land to be cleared for that year's crop, and assign to each family a strip of given width. The men of each family then clear their strip as far back as they consider necessary to meet their rice needs for the year. This assignment is made equitably—if a family gets poor land one year it will be given good land the next. Each family has full rights on the strip which it has cleared while crops are actually being grown; after that it reverts to the general lineage property.

There are no ceremonies or magic connected with food, except for a small family offering made to the ancestors at harvest time. Everything except land is individually owned, but there is little, if any, difference between rich and poor in living standards, and there are no social classes.

Wet Rice

Such a description is far from complete, of course; but it does give one a picture of the sort of society which Linton found still existing among the Tanala. It was a society which consisted of a number of independent mobile villages, where money was unimportant, where a large degree of social equality prevailed, and where anxiety about property was very largely absent. But even while Linton was there, important and far-reaching changes had been brought about by a gradual change from dry rice to wet rice cultivation. The latter is the ordinary type of rice growing found in India, China, etc., where permanent paddyfields are used. To the ordinary observer, this change might seem trifling, but to a Socialist it is far from insignificant, because it affects the economic basis of the society. Let Linton take up the story from here:—

"[Wet rice cultivation] was at first an adjunct to dry rice carried on by individual families. Before the new method was introduced on a large scale, there were already rice swamps of permanent tenure, which never reverted to the village for reassignment. But land favourable for this use was very limited, because of natural factors. Thus there gradually emerged a group of landowners, and with the process came a breakdown in the joint family organization. The cohesiveness of this older unit was maintained by economic interdependence and the need for co-operation. But an irrigated rice field could be tended by a single family, and its head need not recognise any claim to share it with anyone who had not contributed to its produce.

"This group of permanent rice sites formed the nucleus of a permanent village, because the land could not be exhausted as was the land exploited by the dry method. As land suitable for wet rice near the village was presently all taken up, the landless households had to move farther and farther away into the jungle. So far away would they be that they could not return the same day. These distant fields also became household rather than joint family affairs . . . (p.282)

"The mobile villages had been self contained and endogamous. The settled villages were much less so . . . Inter-marriages became common. In this way, the transformation from independent villages to a tribal organization took place.

"The process brought further changes in the patterns of native warfare. The old village had to be defended; but not at so great a cost nor with the necessity for permanent upkeep. When the village became permanent the defences had to be

of a powerful kind involving big investments and permanent upkeep.

"Slaves who were of no economic significance in the old system, now acquired economic importance. . . . Thus the tribal organization grew in solidity, and with the change the old tribal democracy disappeared. The next step was a king at the head who exercised control over the settled elements but not over the mobile ones." (p.283.) There were now real differences between rich and poor. Poverty and oppression became known for the first time among the Tanala.

The Betsileo

Now let us look at the Betsileo, near neighbours of the Tanala, whose society has been based for a long time on wet rice cultivation. There are more swamps and valleys in their part of the country, and they have also taken up irrigation. But from all indications, their original set-up was the same as that of the Tanala. Basically, "we can regard Betsileo as the Tanala culture, after all the changes consequent upon wet rice had become consolidated, organized, and institutionalized. We are therefore observing an important experiment in the dynamics of social change." (p. 284.)

Among the Betsileo there is a rigid system of ground rent, paid by a proportion of the produce. There is a rigid class system, with a king, nobles, commoners and slaves. The powers of the king are absolute over the life and property of everyone. "In short, here was a feudal system of a kind." (p. 285.)

The power of the father in the household became supreme, particularly in the sense of ownership. Unlike the Tanala system, among the Betsileo all household property belongs to the father except his wives' clothes and gifts to his wife and children. Children not infre-

quently desert their parents—a thing unknown among the Tanala.

There is much more emphasis on the supernatural. "The Betsileo make a clear distinction between life and soul. Life ceases with death, the soul continues." (p. 288.) Much of this interest has to do with apprehensions over losing money or position.

The Process of Change

Here, then, we see social change in action. We see changes in the mode of production causing changes in types of ownership. We see these new types of ownership causing changes in the relations which one person can have to another. We see new attitudes arising out of these relations. We see new institutions arising out of these attitudes. (We see these new institutions causing further changes of attitude, and so on). We see, as Linton has already pointed out, the dynamics of social change in action.

Here is another clear and valuable example of a process which is going on daily and hourly around us here in the world today. Let no one say that the Materialist Conception of History is a mere empty theory when we can see it justified up to the hilt in such a practical example as this.

The whole book is of some interest to Socialists, since the main author, Dr. Abram Kardiner, openly acknowledges the great debt which social anthropology owes to historical materialism. Here is another example of the way in which ideas long put forward by Socialists are being today painfully rediscovered by the academic world.

J. C. ROWAN.

MASS PRODUCTION AND MASS MINDS

HAVE we developed a mass-mind as a result of the development and extension of mass production? There certainly seems evidence to support the contention. Mass-production has not only affected the factory worker but also the office workers, who now normally specialize in one small part of the accounting system, as invoice typists, comptometer operators, filing clerks, etc. Again with the extension of the multiple shop and departmental store the assistants now spend their working lives handling a very limited range of commodities. This trend towards greater degrees of specialization is consistently the case throughout society and seems to keep in step with the development of mass production.

Fifty years ago, a man's occupation could be fairly accurately guessed by a glance at his clothes. The navy wearing corduroys and with his lunch wrapped up in a spotted red handkerchief, the workman with a choker round his neck, the farm labourer with his distinctive dress, the cab driver, etc. Their occupations could be easily seen. But with the development of mass-production it would seem as if our tastes are similarly affected. Choice of clothes, for instance, seems to have become standardised. The felt hat, collar and tie, are worn by men irrespective of whether they have a "white-collar job." Even the differences of dress between national groups have largely been obliterated. When we are in the cinema we find difficulty in guessing the nationality of men and women we see in the new films by reference to the clothes they are wearing.

Millions choose the same leisure-time occupation of filling in football pool coupons. Holiday camps where many of the amusements remind one of a factory are becoming the thing for a growing number of people. The most widely read newspapers are those that could be criticized most. Book-printing has become a mass-production business turning out large numbers of escapist publications with a mushroom like existence. In this trade an author has a number of noms-de-plume. Under each one he writes a constant stream of books which are but variations of a single theme which his readers have come to expect.

All of which seems to underline the charge that the last 50 years of technical development have succeeded in creating a population who think en masse. This is not merely a national phenomenon but applies to the whole world of capitalism. It would seem at first sight as if the group herd instinct of primitive man has developed into a world-wide herd instinct.

But further examination of the subject may make us form a different diagnosis of this developing pattern of human behaviour.

There was a time when primitive man was unable to identify himself apart from the herd. Then there were taboos. Experience in the form of continual sickness or death of the members of a tribe living in a certain place might indicate that such an area was unhealthy and, without understanding the reasons for such calamities,

the tribe would institute a taboo preventing their people from living in the area. The reason for this prohibition would in the passage of time be forgotten and the taboo would then assume a magical significance. By the method of trial and error taboos were enforced without the need for thought. But contrast this state of affairs with what goes on to-day. Ask any worker why he is interested in football pools and he will probably make a reasoned and logical statement to the effect that he could badly do with the prize money that is offered and that this is about the only chance he has of acquiring such wealth. Moreover interest in football results create a hobby for him, perhaps the only one he considers he can afford. It will also be apparent that an individual decision was made to "invest in" the pools in each case and that that decision was reached only after some thought. The mass-produced newspapers clinch the argument of the existence of the mass-mind as far as some are concerned but if the contents of the papers that were read 50 years ago were compared with those of today perhaps different conclusions would be reached. For instance, the argument used then to rally working-class support for war was crude and jingoistic. But now the workers are called upon to defend trade union rights and democracy against the dictators who are represented as enemies of the working-class. The ruling-class, in the arguments that they use now today in their newspapers, pay tribute to the advanced level of working class power of thought.

As regards the books that are read, while it is true that a vast quantity of escapist material is printed, it

may come as a shock of surprise—and pleasure—to learn that the classics have a popularity nearly as great, as *The Times* of 28/11/52 points out. This trend has been stimulated by the reprints that mass production has turned out at low prices. There is in addition a great sale of scientific and instructional books of which many have been best sellers. Even popular magazines, which are so criticised by the pessimists, are found to contain instructional and scientific articles covering a wide range of subjects. Fifty years ago such articles would have appeared only in the technical journals of that particular field of science. These popular magazines, which look like proof of a mass-mind, are really evidence of spreading interest among the people.

If 100,000 people are ready to buy a book on the nature of the universe, there is a mass demand at the bookshops. This mass demand is not a proof of falling standards; it means that thousands are being educated, who, 50 years ago would have been left in the illiterate mass.

Minds are creative, mankind today thinks, and thoughts cannot permanently be suppressed by dictators, concentration camps or lying ruling-class propaganda. People are educated primarily to think for the purpose of making them more efficient wage-slaves but the process does not stop there.

Fifty years of technical development have surely had an effect on the mentality of man, but the change that is taking place may well encourage the efforts of the Socialist movement.

F. OFFORD.

WORLD AGREEMENT IS NOT SOCIALISM

LATELY we have been hearing rather more often than usual that the way to solve the world's problems—and particularly that of war—is to have World Government. Probably this is largely due to reaction to the news of the latest atomic weapons, and discussion of their earth-shattering potentialities. The proposal that one World Government should replace the many existing national sovereignties is, of course, by no means a recent one. At first sight it may seem to bear a certain similarity to the proposal to establish Socialism. The movement for World Government is concerned with achieving both universality and peace. So is the Socialist movement. But there the similarity just about ends, as an enquiry into the nature of the various ideas and policies that are advocated in the name of World Government will show.

History of World Government Movements

When and where the ideas of World Government first arose is largely a matter for speculation. Despite the comprehensive power achieved centuries ago by empires such as the Roman and Mongolian, and notwithstanding the work of nineteenth-century "peace societies," organised efforts directed towards World Government are largely a product of the last two decades. Today there are dozens of organisations here and abroad championing federalism as a basis for world order, and disagreeing among themselves over details and methods. Among the pioneers was *Federal Union Ltd.*, founded in London in 1937, and followed a year later by *Federal Union, Inc.* in Chicago. Both are concerned with the

establishment of a "nuclear union" or federation of democracies which, they claim, must lead towards a world federal government.

In 1938 a *World Citizenship Movement* was launched in Britain and later in America, its supporters seeking to transcend national sovereignties by proclaiming themselves "world citizens." One of the best-known personalities in this essentially individual movement was Garry Davis, who six years ago in France renounced his American citizenship in favour of "world citizenship." In 1949 he launched his "World Citizens' Pact," which obtained almost half a million signatures. He returned to America a year later and applied for restoration of his American citizenship.

Meanwhile, other organisations had been springing up like mushrooms. In 1947 a number of American ones coalesced into *United World Federalists*, which included many secessionists from Federal Union. UWF reached a peak of 50,000 members in 1949. It advocates the transformation of the United Nations into a global federal government with powers to "keep the peace." In the event of Russian refusal to participate, it is prepared to support partial federation.

Finally in this brief survey we must mention the *World Movement for World Federal Government*, which is described as "the body co-ordinating the efforts of federalist and World Citizen organisations in many lands." UWF and Federal Union are member organisations of WMWFG, as also is the *Crusade for World Government* (formed in 1947 under the leadership of a

number of British M.P.'s). The fourth World Parliamentary Conference on World Government took place in London in September, and enabled delegates from different nations to reaffirm that all the nations should work together.

The list of names or organisations could be extended considerably. Frederick L. Schuman, in *The Commonwealth of Man*, goes into considerable detail about them, but claims to present no more than "a few leitmotifs in the symphony or cacophony of movements striving for world federation." From this symphony or cacophony we must try to distinguish the main theme of World Government.

Their Policies

The WMWFG champions a federal world constitution, with a bill of rights, providing for a global legislature, executive and judiciary, and world law enforceable on individuals. To achieve this end it favours regional federations, United Nations reform, and national political action. Assuming that these measures could be achieved, they would do nothing to alter the *property* basis of present society. In the absence of majority agreement for revolutionary change, the world constitution, bill of rights, etc., would be modelled upon existing constitutions or upon a combination of them. The continuation of enforceable law, necessitating machinery of coercion, could only be justified on the grounds of the continuation of conflicting interests in a World State.

Recognition that the conflicting interests within property society are not all national ones shows that the advocates of World Government have a fundamentally wrong conception of the nature of the State. The capitalist State exists to prevent the class division in society from disrupting the social organisation, and to protect the interests of capitalist groups from actions instituted by rival capitalist groups abroad. The function of the State is to govern the institutions of property, to defend privileges against outer and inner threats, and to expand the areas within which capitalist exploitation may be profitably carried on.

The advocates of World Government, however, do not accept this, and work on the "social contract" theory of government. They believe that men create government to serve the general welfare, and that it stands impartially above the conflict of class interests. The actual conduct of governments belies this theory, and reinforces the Socialist contention that the capitalist system cannot be transformed by an expansion of the scope or functions of the State. The problems of mankind are not to be solved by the extension of government.

The Crusade for World Government

Some of the propaganda for World Government is not easily recognisable as reformism, and bears a superficial resemblance to Socialist propaganda. Consider the following passage from the Policy and Programme Statement of the Crusade for World Government, 1953-4:

"A new order in world affairs is overdue. That new order must be a World Government obtaining its authority from the peoples of the world, representing all peoples, and having power to act in their common interests; a World Government which takes over and disbands national armed forces; which establishes and enforces the rule of world law, and which ensures social and economic justice for all peoples. World Government must come by the demand of the citizens of the world. . . ."

The language is deceptively revolutionary. For "a World Government" one could read "Socialism" and, if not too critical, one could imagine that the two move-

ments shared the same object. It is worthwhile, therefore, to examine the passage quoted very carefully.

A World Government representing all *peoples*, and having power to act in their common interests gives the impression that each man, woman and child, would be so represented on a basis of social equality. If the "common interests" are also those of each and every person then the form of society cannot continue to be a property one with antagonistic classes—it must be Socialism. It will be noted that the Policy Statement does not list the abolition of property relationships among its aims, and this omission makes an important difference to the significance of the other proposals. These proposals—the world government, rule of world law, etc.—in effect boil down to the ideal of federating the separate nations into one supernational, *without changing the class nature of society*.

It is not surprising that the Crusade for World Government should advocate no revolutionary change. In its own words, it "is not influenced or controlled by any political party or group but is supported by people in all walks of life, of different national origins, creeds and opinions." It is possible that there are some members of CWG or other World Government organisations who claim that Socialism is their ultimate object, but that World Government is the immediate necessity. To these we would say: the quest for peace is admirable, and a world community of interests eminently desirable. But the movement for World Government, like all other reformist movements, is trying to alter the *results* of the present system instead of working to abolish the system itself.

Seekers after peace and an equalitarian society are faced with the existence of property (private or state), the division of mankind into those with property rights and those without them, and all the ideas that enable this social system to continue. All these are inseparable aspects of capitalist society, and if any one is to be changed then all must be changed. A movement that does not require its members to be united in opposition to Capitalism is not capable of advancing Socialism. Those who desire a peaceful world run in the interests of all mankind will not achieve what they desire by supporting the policies of world government organisations. The comment of Gerard J. Mangone adds a final word of caution to any who doubt this: "World Government is but a technique of doing something on a large scale, not a guarantee of a better life for all."

S. R. P.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, October, 1904.)

CLASSES exist; you may ignore them, but they will exist still with the respective characters they engender. Though you ignore them, they will not ignore you. . . . In the Socialist workmen the class-instinct has become transformed into the conviction that, in the words of Lassalle, 'he is called to raise the principle of his class into the principle of the age.' He knows that in the moment of victory—of the realisation of the dominion of his class—the ugly head of class itself must fall, and society emerge. Militant, his cause is identified with class; triumphant with Humanity." (Quoted from "Socialism and Ethics," by E. Belfort Bax.)

GEORGE BAZIN

We have learned of the death early this year of George Bazin, one of the group involved in the Islington dispute recounted recently in "Notes on Party History."

He joined the Party not long after its formation, having heard Fitzgerald speaking outdoors in Finsbury. The 1906 dispute ended his membership, but his enthusiasm for Socialism remained all his life; for the last 20 years he was almost blind, but he attended meetings regularly and gave generously to the funds. He often singled out a questioner, particularly if he was young, after a meeting; more than one present member joined the Party through contact with Bazin's wide knowledge and friendly manner.

His passing has broken another link with the early days, and taken away one who never gave up working for Socialism.

CORRECTIONS

On Page 15 of the September issue, column two, second line, "World Socialist Party of America" should read "World Socialist Party of the United States."

On Page 21, column two, line 21, "Western Socialist" should read "Western Glarion."

SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

at
52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET
(Clapham North or Clapham Common Tube Stns.)

A series of regular Sunday evening lectures will be held at Head Office throughout the winter. Commencing each Sunday at 8 p.m.

- 10th Oct. "WHY ATTLEE WENT TO CHINA"—
E. WILLMOTT.
17th " " "LIVING AND THINKING"—R. COSTER.
24th " " "WEAPONS OF MODERN WARFARE"—
H. WAITE.
31st " " "DOES RUSSIA WANT PEACE?"—L. BRYAN.
7th Nov. "FOOD AND MONEY"—R. AMBRIDGE.

DELEGATE MEETING SOCIAL

at
HEAD OFFICE
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6th at 7.30 p.m.
Refreshments Available Music and Dancing

FULHAM LECTURES

- at
691, FULHAM ROAD, S.W.6
Alternate Thursdays at 8 p.m.
7th Oct. "SOCIALISM AND HUMAN NATURE"—S. R. PARKER.
21st " " "THE MEANING OF ANARCHISM"—(Speaker to be appointed).
4th Nov. "DEVELOPMENTS IN S.E. ASIA"—F. OFFORD.
18th " " "LITERATURE AND THE M.C.H."—R. COSTER.

LEWISHAM LECTURES

at
DAVENPORT HOUSE, DAVENPORT ROAD, CATFORD, S.E.6
Monday, 27th October, at 8 p.m.
Title to be announced
R. COSTER

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

NOTTINGHAM MEETINGS

Co-operative Hall, Parliament St., Nottingham
Sundays at 7 p.m.

- 31st October "HUMAN PROBLEMS AND SOCIALISM"—S. CASH.
28th Nov. "SOCIALISM AND PLENTY"—J. DARCY.

(Further announcements later)

DARTFORD DISCUSSION

Friday, 12th November at 8 p.m.
Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield Street.
"SOCIALISM AND PLENTY"—J. DARCY

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP.—Meets Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at Woodworker's Hall, Coupars Alley, Wellgate. Correspondence to P. G. Cavanagh, 1b, Benzie Road, Dundee.

HERTS.—Secretary: B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wednesdays 13th and 27th October, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

ROMFORD.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.) Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

RUGBY.—Group meets alternate Mondays 4th and 18th October at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

WATFORD.—Group meets alternate Thursdays 7th and 21st October at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Road, (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

PUBLIC DEBATE
SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

v.

LIBERAL PARTY

at the
TRADE UNION HALL, WOODFORD ROAD, WATFORD
(Near Junction Station)

on

on **FRIDAY, 29th OCTOBER, at 8 p.m.**

Subject: **"THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOCIALISM
WOULD BENEFIT THE WORKING CLASS OF
THIS COUNTRY."**

Speakers: Miss **JEAN HENDERSON** (Prospective Liberal
Candidate, Watford Boro' Division).
R. COSTER, S.P.G.B.

ISLINGTON PUBLIC MEETING

at

ISLINGTON CENTRAL LIBRARY,
68, HOLLOWAY ROAD, N.W.

Wednesday, 13th October, at 8 p.m.

"SOCIETY AND THE 'H' BOMB"—H. WAITE

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Mondays: Finsbury Square.
Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.
Thursdays: Tower Hill.
Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.

Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist
Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee
at the Head Office or to a local branch.

BOREHAM WOOD

Will members and sympathisers willing to
cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood
contact:

I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove,
Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley, Birmingham.

BLOOMSBURY. Correspondence to Secretary. c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. October 7th and 21st at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

BRIGHTON. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. I. Groves, 92, St. Georges Way, Peckham, S.E.15.

CROYDON meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd. (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: H. J. Wilson, 7, Cyril Road, Bexleyheath, Kent. Tel.: Bexleyheath 350.

EALING meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCLES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6., (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.). Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

GLASGOW (City) meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halls, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 4th and 18th October, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Farmer, 46, Fernie Street, Glasgow, N.W.

HACKNEY meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Iremey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

HAMPSTEAD meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Road Met. Stn.). Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware, Middlesex.

HIGH WYCOMBE Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.9 p.m., discussion after branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191, Bowerdean Road.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after branch business. L. H. Courtney, 53, Canonbury Park South, Islington, N.1.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

LEYTON Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

MANCHESTER Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 5th and 19th October George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2. (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

PALMERS GREEN Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

ST. PANCRAS meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. LONDON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, Joan Lestor, 59, Chilbert Road, Balham, S.W.17.

SOUTHEND meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Grisley, 47, Eastbourne Grove, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

SWANSEA Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7.9.30 p.m., at Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Man, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Ess.:x. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 603 Vol. 50 November, 1954

THE NEW CHINESE CONSTITUTION

THE AGE OF SEDATIVES

THE CHANGING PUBLIC HOUSE

MARILYN MONROE

THE TASK AHEAD

ECONOMICS OF CAPITALISM

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

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4

The London Bus Strike

(BY A BUSMAN)

ON OCTOBER 18TH, LONDON was in the grip of an ever spreading bus strike. As each issue of daily and evening newspapers reported more and more garages affected and more services withdrawn, so the streets of London became increasingly crowded with motor cars and other vehicles and extra police had to be detailed for traffic control.

The strike, which by October 18th embraced 43 out of 84 Central London bus garages was the boiling over of a feeling of resentment that has been simmering amongst busmen for a long time. An understanding of the position requires a review of bus worker's history over the past 15 years.

Before the 1939-1945 war London busmen received a wage above the average paid to workers in other industries throughout Great Britain. They attained this position by their ready willingness to struggle and the favourable position of their industry. A passenger transport strike represents a dead loss of income to the employers. A stock of passenger rides cannot be built up in preparation for a strike and travellers do not take two rides in the place of one after the strike in order to recoup the employers for the loss. Further, it has a damaging effect on other industries.

During the war busmen were urged to sacrifice some of their working conditions in favour of the war effort. They anticipated that, after the war, they would not only regain the things they had sacrificed but receive many improvements in addition. They formulated a programme of demands which became known as the "Post War Policy," to be achieved when the time was opportune. The time has never been opportune. With other workers, they were told that the country had to be put back on its feet, export markets had to be captured, the dollar gap had to be closed and the London Transport undertaking was financially "in the red." There were no end of reasons advanced in favour of wage freeze and wage restraint and why the time was not opportune. A number of minor concessions were gained, an extra quarter time for Sunday work, 9d. per hour for Saturday afternoon work (see SOCIALIST STANDARD, February, 1949), plus a few pay increases of 7/- or 8/-, the last of which was awarded at the beginning of this year. With the ever increasing cost of living the busmen have found that, despite their pay increases, they have been getting poorer and poorer.

This has resulted in a heavy staff wastage which the employment of more women conductors has failed to reduce. The wastage has become accelerated during recent years. British Transport Commission reports show that during a four year period ending 1952, 25,485 drivers and conductors left their jobs and

from January 1st, 1952, to January 1st, 1953, there was a net decline in staff 1,012. In a sellers' market the opportunity was present for busmen to gain a higher price for their labour power.

The gaps in the bus services caused by this staff shortage have been partially filled by busmen working excessive overtime, an opportunity which many of them seized to build up their meagre pay packets. Early this year the busmen began to realise that they were missing a favourable opportunity and that whilst they contented themselves with getting extra pay for working seven days a week plus other forms of overtime, they were solving the London Transport Executive's staff problem and missing the boat that could provide them with improved wages and working conditions.

A ban on rest day and extra duty work was imposed at a few garages and gradually spread throughout the London bus fleet until it embraced almost 90 per cent. of the 114 garages and trolley bus depots. A demand for a £10 10s. weekly wage for all sections (Country Service sections now get a much lower wage than Central London busmen), a five day 40 hour working week and payment during periods of sickness became a rallying point.

The London Transport Executive claimed that this demand was far in excess of anything that they could concede and, although they made certain proposals for a longer working day with increases in overtime pay, they would not negotiate whilst the overtime ban was in operation. Then, without consultation with the men's Trade Union representatives and in a most provocative manner, they introduced into a few garages a set of schedules that made drastic cuts in a number of bus services. This put the spark to the tinder and garage after garage came out on strike, many without the new emergency schedules coming out in support of those which had them.

The busmen are now claiming that workers in other industries have forged ahead of them and that the inconveniences of their job are not compensated for by the wages they receive. For getting out of bed during the small hours of the morning one week and getting home during the small hours of the morning the following week, for having irregular meal reliefs and a disrupted home life a bus conductor receives a basic wage of £7 14s. 6d. for a 44 hour week—a driver gets 4s. extra. Only by working on Saturday afternoons, on Sundays and national holidays and by performing irksome spreadover duties, can a man get his wage over the £8 mark. A high physical standard is demanded of new recruits but sickness is not catered for—no work, no pay, is the principle. A new contributory pension scheme, recently introduced, is so meagre that it is a matter for ridicule. Annual holidays must frequently be taken during the least pleasant months of the year. The system of rest days makes it necessary to work seven consecutive days before a busman gets a day off except when he has a series of Sundays free from work.

That was the case the London busmen were making on October 18th. A conference was called that day and the delegates from the garages decided by a heavy majority vote to call for a resumption of work and the lifting of the overtime ban in order to have the emergency schedules withdrawn and to allow negotiations to commence with the submission of a claim for higher wages, regulated overtime, to level up the rates of pay between the Central and the Country Services (the Red and the Green)

and a number of other items.

The overtime ban had been welded into a strong weapon and it gave the busmen the initiative in the struggle. The introduction of the emergency schedules, by precipitating a strike put the busmen on the defensive and gave the L.T.E. the initiative. Whether it was consciously devised by the L.T.E. or not, it was an astute move and the busmen were snared. Now they impatiently await the outcome of the negotiation.

As with every other commodity, the price of labour power fluctuates with variations in supply and demand, but the fluctuations are not automatic. They are brought about by the efforts of employers to obtain cheap labour power when the supply is plentiful and by the struggles of workers to get more when the demand exceeds the supply. London busmen are working on sound lines in using the present high demand for their particular brand of labour power to force up its price.

As usual there are no end of well wishers and advisers who have cures for the case. Harry Pollitt and Arthur Deakin are for once in agreement in expounding a cure. They both accept that the financial position of the London Transport Executive precludes a satisfactory settlement to the busmen's claims. Some means must be found to improve this financial position and they both speak for a reduction in the fuel tax which would free the L.T.E. from a heavy burden of taxation and release a large sum of money which could be utilised to reduce bus fares and increase busmen's pay. This is an old, old, stinking red herring that dates back to the days of the agitation for the repeal of the Corn Laws. One section of the capitalist class considers itself unjustly treated in relation to another section and enlists the aid of the workers to secure advantages for itself. In the early days of the 19th century it was the heavy tax on corn that was supposed to weigh heavily on the workers by keeping up the price of bread. Repeal the Corn Laws, they were told, and bread will be cheaper and your wages will buy more. They fell for it. The Corn Laws were repealed after years of effort and the workers had to fight against the drive to reduce their wages as soon as there was a tendency for the cost of living to fall. The position will be no different for London busmen. If a reduction in the fuel tax was achieved they would still have to fight to get higher wages.

Incidentally, the London Transport Executive have indicated that they are not interested in a reduction in the fuel tax. When a proposal was made to them by the Transport and General Workers' Union to use the backs of bus tickets to publicise a campaign for fuel tax reduction, they replied that they were a section of the British Transport Commission which relied mainly on railways for its revenue. A fuel tax reduction would assist their competitors, the road haulage companies, to more successfully compete with the railways.

A reduction in the amount of interest paid to bondholders by the Government and collected by them from the British Transport Commission is another proposal to put money into the Commission's coffers and so make higher wages for its employees possible. It is not unknown for a Government in such a case to waive part of the interest charge payable by a nationalised industry, but this would mean higher taxation so that the Government could continue to meet its own legal obligations to the former shareholders now holding Government stock. It would, however, not in the least lessen the efforts of the

Board and the Government to keep wages down as much as possible. The general body of capitalists paying the increased taxation would press for lower fares and freight charges not higher transport wages.

The Press has been mildly sympathetic to the busmen. There are many who say that the busmen have a good case, but . . . and the "but" evolves into a variety of schemes to get more out of them. One scheme in the forefront is to introduce one-man-operated buses on a wider scale. They have already been introduced in places on the outskirts of London and in the provinces. One man only is required to drive the vehicle and to collect fares, attend to the safety and comfort of passengers and, in general, conduct the bus. Some development of this nature is to be expected for it has ever been a rule of capitalism that, when the employers are forced to pay higher wages they look around for ways and means to reduce their total wage bill by the introduction of labour saving machinery. That ultimately means, not less labour for all workers, but more labour for some and enforced idleness for others popularly known as a slump.

It may seem to busmen and all other workers that the position is impossible of improvement. Not so. There may be improvements for some of the workers for a long

time and for all the workers for a short time, but the range of all improvements is very limited within capitalist society. Not a reduction in the amount of interest paid on investments but the abolition of investment; not struggles for higher wages but the end of the wages system; not joint consultation between employers and employees, but the elimination of employment and unemployment, a world wherein everyone produces to his best ability and has access to the wealth produced, in a word—Socialism. That is the only alternative to an indefinite continuation of the struggle to get enough to live on for those millions who constitute the working class.

Busmen have always had one weakness in their struggles—inter-garage rivalries, inter-section suspicions, inter-service jealousies and a lack of close communication to allow of concerted action. The overtime ban did much to overcome those difficulties and give a common purpose. The strike, as it was not complete, has recreated the difficulties. To achieve Socialism there must be a breaking down of the rivalries and antagonisms between all workers in all industries and a unification, on the political field, on the basis of a clear understanding and awareness of their interests—AS A CLASS.

W. WATERS.

THE AGE OF SEDATIVES

THE 21 years between 1918 and 1939 have been called the Aspirin Age. They were the years of jazz and the flappers' new morality, of sensation and unemployment, when society first pressed down in earnest upon the accelerator. The years when a world in crises and turmoil turned for comfort to the little white tablet. A future historian may likewise seek to describe the period since 1945 in terms of the problems and panaceas of the day. He might well consider calling our times the Pheno-barbitone Phase.

"This 20th Century," said the *Medical World* of May, 1953, "is an age of sedation therapy." About one-tenth of all our prescriptions for drugs are for barbiturates; in addition 10 million aspirin tablets, commonly used as sedatives, are taken in Britain every day. These mountains of drugs are consumed largely in combat with insomnia, which is becoming one of our commonest complaints and as such cannot be disregarded by to-day's medical investigator. Even the august British Medical Association spent much time at a recent meeting discussing it as a major recognised illness. The day may yet come when a certificate will be signed which gives insomnia as the cause of death. The widely used sedatives have many disadvantages, such as the possibility of raising an annoying skin rash. A more sinister complica-



tion is the fatal effect of an overdose, which is sometimes taken whilst the mind is dulled by the drug. We are all familiar with the story of suicide by aspirin, now the Registrar-General reports that barbiturates are responsible for more suicides than any other substance or group of substances. The number of cases of accidental poisoning by these drugs is also increasing.

Sleep is vital

The nature of the apparently elusive thing which we call sleep is uncertain. A popular view sees it as the replacement of expended energy, like the re-charging of a battery. Another opinion, which is gaining support, is that it is a state of inhibition of the senses caused by their over-stimulation during wakefulness. A fair parallel

is the donkey which is beaten excessively and so becomes indifferent to the touch of the whip. However, it is a complicated business and best left alone in this article. It is indisputable that sleep is vital to the human being, since it provides the necessary protection from the dangers of exhaustion. Sound sleep is best achieved in the presence of emotional and physical relaxation—any disturbance of it can cause great distress.

There are many reasons for sleeplessness, from cold feet to indigestible suppers. But the growth of chronic insomnia and the increase in barbiturate consumption are not to be explained by larger sales of bedtime fish and chips. A Middlesex doctor wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* of August 5th, 1953. . . . "The root of the trouble which creates the enormous present demand for sleeping draughts . . . is found in men in the increasing strain of their business worries and activities, in their fear of competition, in their apprehension of losing their jobs, in the friction among those working together under high pressure in small offices day after day after arriving there in trains overcrowded to suffocation. I have in 30 years of practice had more than enough occasion to see such cases. . . . The increasing demand for sedation is a result of the high pressure of modern life and the inability of many people to adapt themselves to it." That is plain enough, and is a fairly representative opinion.

The Advertisers' Remedies

The cure of sleeplessness presents no problem to the wordy advertiser. "This customer said she suffered from insomnia," says one advertisement, showing a lady in blissful slumber upon a sharply identifiable mattress. Certain pillows, blankets and bedtime drinks, we are told, have the same desirable effect. Everyone has read the strip cartoon advertisements which suggest that a particular beverage can give us " . . . real, relaxed " sleep which can "reach down to our subconscious mind" and open the door to success in many a field, from travel-agent to trapeze-artist. (One strip which was rather nearer the mark dealt with the problems of a harassed housewife and mother—her success was managing the kids without flying off the handle.) A subtler approach is offered in America. New York City has the "World's Only Sleep Shop," a retail establishment which provides for a bottle-ful of bedtime difficulties. There are firm mattresses and soft mattresses, and some half-firm and half-soft. Dust-free pillows, musical alarm-clocks, anti-snore ear plugs, window silencers and so on. The very latest books about sleep are also on sale, if you should still think that you

need them. (In America, incidentally, the yearly consumption of barbiturates reaches the shocking average of 24 tablets for every man, woman and child.) There is one thing which the sleep salesmen never mention. About half of the world's population sleep—quite soundly—on the earth or a hard mat, with no pillow or one of wood or china and with little or no covering.

The Road to Suicide

This is a world of war and destruction, noise and competition, hydrogen bombs and helicopters, speed and smog, and to live in it we must make unnatural "stop and start" demands on our bodies and nervous systems. These demands are responsible for the rising incidence of nervous disease; each man between the ages of 35 and 65 has to-day as much chance of going at least once into the overcrowded and understaffed mental hospitals as of contracting cancer of the lung, or of being knocked down on the road. And for every patient in the mental hospitals there are thousands outside who are suffering from emotional disorders and who go to their doctor asking for something to calm their nerves or to give them a good night's rest. The doctor, often himself a victim of modern strain, and with a waiting room probably already overfull, has little time to try to unravel the causes of his patient's trouble. The cure in most cases—a long and thorough rest—is out of the question, for both patient and doctor have a living to earn. So an attempt is made to outwit the symptoms of the illness and the patient leaves the surgery gratefully clutching a prescription for a sleeping draught. Thus a nervous person may start on the road to barbiturate addiction—by far the commonest type of drug addiction—and possibly eventual suicide. For a lengthy use of barbiturates can in itself foster the very conditions—insomnia, depression, anxiety—which it is originally prescribed to cure. For this reason, many doctors try to get away with prescribing a "placebo," which is a "sugar and spice" pill designed to calm the patient in the belief that he is taking an effective drug.

An old, wise man, once said that we always proceed from the simple to the complex and ignore the obvious. The expanding use of sedatives is an example of this. It is an elaborate attempt to shelve a problem which in its bones is quite straightforward. If the tensions of modern capitalism do not relax, the human nervous system will suffer deepening harm. That is the harsh simplicity of the matter. It is worth a little cogitation. Even if it means losing a little more sleep.

IVAN.

THE TASK AHEAD

Bringing Socialism Nearer

THE 50th Anniversary of the founding of our Party is a time for looking back over the years—and forward to the years to come. How will the next half-century compare with the last, and what will it have in store for the Socialist movement? The details, even perhaps the general outline, of how things will work out must largely remain matters for speculation. For our part, we can sum up what we would like to see at any time in one word—Socialism. But a more practical consideration is: how can it be brought about?

We know that the propagation of Socialist ideas must

go on, and that these ideas must gain far wider acceptance than they have gained so far. The introduction of Socialism cannot be the work of a few hundred or a few thousand. It must be the work of the overwhelming majority.

At this point it is not uncommon for our critic to remark "so it's taken you 50 years to get 1,000 Socialists—how long will it take to get 2,000 million?" If he is mathematically minded he may offer his own estimate of the time needed. It cannot, of course, be proved that this estimate is either correct or incorrect. We can only

challenge the assumptions on which it is based. If the people we address are favourably disposed towards Socialism they will want to know how to help to bring it about. It is to such readers that this article is directed.

One of the secrets of success in the business of capitalist politics is the promise of immediate delivery of the electoral goods—even though their shoddy quality soon leads to bitter disappointment. So long as there is Capitalism it is always apparently more "practical" to reform it rather than to get rid of it.

When the Socialist advises abstention from supporting any of the parties of Capitalism he is often dismissed as being "unpractical." Yet how much more practical is it to go on asking for slight variations of something you don't like anyway?

The inevitable disillusion that awaits supporters of all parties that offer to run Capitalism (and promise to solve its problems) paves the way for people to consider Socialism as a real alternative. At first, they may question the possibility of it ever coming, and may voice all kinds of doubts about it—doubts which, in view of the novelty of the idea to them, are understandable. Eventually the answers to our sympathiser's questions are more or less accepted by him. He then reaches the point of thinking "Socialism is the answer all right. But what can be done about it?"

What can a Socialist do to bring into being the world he wants? Why, make other Socialists, of course! Talk to them about it, explain what it means, challenge the prejudices that stand in the way, correct the misunderstandings that confuse the issue. It is not just a case of waiting until someone attacks the S.P.G.B. or Socialism and then jumping to the defence. If, for example, someone says "it's human nature to fight wars" then he can be given evidence that it is no such thing. All ideas that oppose Socialism must be persistently and strongly challenged, and followed up where possible with a positive

Socialist point of view.

The sympathetic newcomer to the S.P.G.B.'s case will probably find that he needs to get more knowledge to back up his arguments. Accordingly he will want to read about various aspects of the Socialist case, and maybe discuss them with others who share his outlook. If his feeling of agreement with Socialism is strong enough he will, in due course, consider applying for membership of the Party.

Think of the ways in which the Socialist movement is handicapped now. Think also of what more Socialists could make possible. We need more literature—and in particular a bigger and better SOCIALIST STANDARD with a larger circulation. Last month it was an enlarged special number, which required much more preparation and much more money than we can usually afford. But with more help we could have a journal of this size every month—or more frequently. We could also publish more much needed pamphlets on various aspects of our case.

There are many other things that need to be done on a larger scale. In addition to actually producing the literature (writing, editing, etc.) it has to be distributed and advertised. The number of public meetings we are able to hold is now limited by our meagre resources. When we launch an electoral campaign its success depends on the amount of work members and sympathisers put into it. And remember that all these are very practical ways of bringing our object nearer.

To our sympathisers we would say this. The Socialist movement will never flourish just on sympathy. It needs action—your action. If you agree with most of what we say but are doubtful on some point then let us hear about it. Attend the meetings advertised in this journal, and make contact with your local branch of the Party (see back page). If, for one reason or another, you are unable to make these visits you can always write to us.

S. R. P.

THE SAME OLD STORY IN NIGERIA

THE following is taken from the *Daily Times*, published in Onitsha, Nigeria (25 June, 1954). It is a revealing comment on the problem of building up capitalism in Nigeria now that that country has been "freed" from direct British rule. The workers are to work harder in order to attract foreign investors, but are promised that they will not be "slaves." They are in short to be wage-slaves like the workers in Britain.

"Generally the output of a Nigerian worker and that of his counterpart in a similar job in Britain are in the ratio of 1—4 that of a Nigerian miner is about a third of that of his British counterpart. This statement was made here by Mr. R. A. Njoku, Central Minister of Commerce and Industries, in the course of a lecture which he delivered under the auspices of the local branch of the N.C.N.C. If industrialisation was to be successfully carried out wages, cost of transport, and other recurrent expenses, he stated, should not be too high, otherwise there might be inflation of prices. The Minister regretted that the productivity of Nigerian workers was so low and appealed to everyone to be more productive. It was not easy, he said, to get foreign capital. We have

to persuade investors to come. They are not anxious to come. Mr. Njoku said industrialisation could be run on a partnership basis with adequate safeguards for aliens with capital and for the country and that a stable form of government was essential: he said that any venture which would make Nigerians slaves would never be allowed in the country."

H. G. B.

When we mention the miseries of the poor we are assured that the rich also have their burdens. If this is so why do the rich object so fiercely to the prospect of being relieved of their burdens? There must be a catch somewhere!

The trouble with the rich is to find occupation; the same trouble afflicts the poor. But the rich only want easy and pleasant occupation, something to help them to pass their idle lives away; the poor must find occupation, usually arduous and unpleasant, in order to keep their lives from passing away.

MARILYN MONROE

A Cultural Phenomena

BEAUTY is only skin-deep," wrote the Self-Made Merchant to his son, "but that's deep enough to satisfy any reasonable man." That was sixty years ago, before it became customary to use the hands for describing beauty and when beauty, however deep, kept most of its skin under cover. The reasonable man's pleasure to-day is Marilyn Monroe, and the publishers and booksellers, with their empirical knowledge of his tastes cannot give him enough of her—at second hand, of course.

Reigning beauties of the past, for all that poets have made of them, reigned only in courts and castes. Miss Monroe's sovereignty is practically unlimited, geographically or socially. Not long back, Manchester City Councillors averred her to be preferable to one of Henry Moore's sculptures, and a Work of Art: a national columnist went farther and said she was an Act of God. Even the Communists' censoriousness of her as a dollar princess has the scent of sour grapes. Marilyn Monroe, in fact, represents the acme of desirability in this day and age.

Times have changed, of course. This writer once heard an old lady describe how, mounting her bicycle in the eighteen-nineties, she was attacked by a woman who screamed: "You brazen thing! I can see your ankles!" It is not only that people in the 'nineties would have been shocked by Miss Monroe, undissembled in tight or negligible clothing: they would have thought her ugly, too. The beauties of the day—Lily Lantry, Olga Nethersole, La Belle Otero—were strapping girls with all the appearance of good living. Nobody talked of slimming, and the ladies' magazines advertized a treatment called Diano which, if it was all true, was nothing short of an inflationary measure.

The case for eternal beauty becomes as illogical as the argument that there is eternal morality, when one considers the variations in both according to time and place. Metropolitan man may pull faces over the Congo's idea of pulchritude; it is certain that the African native in turn would not think a lot of Marilyn Monroe. It is a question of what you esteem, and that itself is a question of what your world finds necessary. There is an old but appropriate story of a farmer and his guest together gazing across the countryside: the townsman rhapsodizes about the rolling vista, the farmer spits and says, "Thirty-bob-an-acre stuff." Most likely the African, as well as the Eskimo and some others, would say something of the sort about Miss Monroe.

"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder" is a fair enough statement of fact, but it leaves the important question unanswered. Man is the beholder: what puts, and transforms, beauty in his eye—his mind's eye? In primitive communities it is chiefly physical function, the apparent capacity for child-bearing and hard work. In



class-divided societies, beauty has always been seen to a large extent in terms of conspicuous leisure; the sirens of all western civilization seem to have done little else through history but loll on divans (if you don't believe it, look in the art galleries). And, of course, every age creates its own motives and needs which help to shape its concept of beauty. According to the franker historians, mediaeval ladies often assailed the nostrils as well as the heart, but nobody minded much; nowadays, with a century's public health behind and the soap advertisements before us, a whiff of perspiration kills romance.

Marilyn Monroe is the personification of what popular consciousness in our time deems desirable. The rubato walk is a source of delight; in Victorian England, when no respectable woman thought sex pleasurable, it would have brought an indignant flush to a decent man's face. When the family was sacrosanct (because the economic ties which held it were still fairly strong) sexual provocation was shameful. Now the ties have sagged, the morality has sagged too, and beauty can present itself to arouse the instinctive polygamist in every man. And the conspicuous leisure is still there—in impractical dress as well as the sultriness and the aura of wealth.

There is more to Marilyn Monroe than merely physique, however. She is "the sexiest girl in Hollywood," the girl who posed naked for a calendar and takes an interest in Freud. Almost every day there is a fresh tale and a fresh photograph: her skirts blow over her head, she distorts perspective with her callipygeous charms. Her marriage to Joe Di Maggio was a feast for the papers and everybody's imagination. The husky, virile Joe, a masculine idol, and the supremely nubile Marilyn saying: "You can't take a career to bed and cuddle it," and: "I like honeymoons." Miss Monroe is, in fact, a dream. In Hollywood they make dreams; she is the most delectable dream of all.

The visual promise of pneumatic bliss is only the beginning. The real secret is the legend. Earlier film beauties, the vamps, the sweater girls and the rest, established conventions for exciting without intent to gratify; the Monroe legend is all of intent to gratify. Miss Monroe

suggests not merely that she would please you but also that you would please her. From the humbleness-to- riches life story, to the fabulous marriage and the scene where a plumber gropes for his pipe-wrench in her bath, the whole is a gorgeous fantasy into which every unsatisfied person of either sex can project every longing. It is Cinderella up-to-date, in glorious technicolour, and they live voluptuously as well as happily ever after.

None of this reflects any particular discredit on Miss Monroe or her employers, the film magnates. People who sell things, even dreams, are simply cashing-in on other people's needs—the only important criticism is of the world which creates such needs on so large a scale. The brevity of Marilyn Monroe's marriage indeed suggests that she herself is no more satisfied than a good many of her admirers. Certainly she knows no greater security—

the careers of public entertainers are as precarious as those of any other people.

One of the paradoxes of our time is that, as fast as morality has slackened and so removed apparent obstacles to well-fulfilled sexual lives, the lack of satisfaction has grown. It is impossible to imagine a stable, sane community deifying a dream, but modern culture is largely made up of dreams. There is Miss Monroe; there are the revenge dreams of the brutal gangster stories, the escape dreams of popular romance, the vicarious thrills of speedways, space-fiction and the big fights. Our society, despising primitive people who incorporate sex practices in their cultures, has erected Marilyn Monroe as its tribal symbol—the symbol of frustration and unsatisfied desires.

R. COSTER.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," November, 1904)

Labour Parties

To a Socialist the spectacle of the Labour Parties at home and in the Colonies affords a very interesting study of the relations of Labour politics to Socialism. To one who, in forming opinions on the tendencies manifested in society today, is accustomed to look merely on the surface of things, the formation of these Labour parties in various parts of the British Empire may appear to be the forerunner of a great revolutionary movement on the part of organised labour. This view will be all the more strongly held if he should belong to one or the other of the alleged Socialist bodies whose business meetings consist of talking about the Labour Representation Committee, the "Labour" movement, the "Labour" party and, more important than all, the "Labour" leaders. To a member of *The Socialist Party*, however, that is to a person drilled in the methods of scientific analysis, the innocent economics and puerile politics which form the foundation and super-structure of "Labour parties" at home and abroad, are more often sources of regret than satisfaction. . . .

With regard to the Labour Representation Committee at home, it may seem unnecessary to criticise this, the most recent indication of the hopelessness of those who, in the name of labour, try to square the interests of the workers with those of their masters and secure justice for the working-class under capitalism. The programme, or what stands for a programme of this body, is of such a character that a good many loyal Liberals, without giving up in the slightest degree their faith in capitalism, would readily accept it. But in the eyes of the horny-handed sons of toil who run the L.R.C., a party is more important than a programme, and if a "big" party can only be got together by a small programme, then the less of the latter the better for the needy politician. . . .

The Labour Representation Committee was called into existence by the Trade Union Congress, and, as the child, inherits some of the characteristics of the parent, the proceedings at the last meeting of the latter body will enlighten the workers as to what they may expect from the "Labour" Party of this country. At the Congress

some of the delegates expressed the opinion that it would be a good thing if all the trade unionists were called off the L.R.C. They have issued a manifesto in favour of free trade, asked for old age pensions and an extension of the Workmen's Compensation Act. At the same time some of their leaders tell us that this very "Compensation" Act is responsible for the older men being flung out of employment by the master-class, who are unwilling to take risks attendant upon the employment of workers over a certain age. One delegate pleaded earnestly for "fair" rents. How wise! Fair robbery! . . .

The work of the Socialist here at home or in the Colonies is to build up a *Socialist Party*, clear in the knowledge of the irreconcilability of the interests of the wage worker and the master, ever warning the working-class of the pitfalls in the shape of "labour" parties strewn the path which leads to emancipation from wage-slavery, ever teaching the slaves of capitalism that only by the overthrow of the present system of society and the establishment of the Socialist Republic can the various evils confronting the working-class be removed.

In the country *The Socialist Party of Great Britain* alone stands for the Revolution.

E. J. B. ALLEN.

The Challenge of Socialism

Out of Oxford, home of lost causes, comes "The Challenge of Socialism," by Henry Pelling, tutor and don of Queen's College, Oxford, in "The British and Political Series."

It gives a summary of Anarchist and Socialist (also economic writers), speakers and writers from 1700 onwards down to Our Herbie, and, while treating carefully Marx and Engels, does not stress Materialism and quite carefully ignores S.P.G.B., although giving a good record of S.D.F. and Labour politicians during this last half century.

It is quite a good book of reference and worth a glimpse. 300 pages.

J. M. B.

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

THE NEW CHINESE CONSTITUTION

THE new Constitution of the Chinese Republic, endorsed in Peking in September last by the delegates of the National People's Congress, was published in full in the organ of the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers Parties (Bucharest, 24 September, 1954).

According to the Preamble to the Constitution, the "People's Republic of China" is "a people's democratic dictatorship," and the "system of people's democracy—new democracy—of the People's Republic of China can in a peaceful way eliminate exploitation and poverty and build a prosperous and happy Socialist society."

It goes on to say that the Chinese Republic is now in a period of transition:—"The central task of the State during this transition period is to bring about, step by step, the Socialist industrialisation of the country and to accomplish, step by step, the Socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and capitalist industry and commerce."

The claim is made that in the past few years the land system has been successfully reformed, counter-revolutionaries have been suppressed and the conditions have been created "for planned economic reconstruction and the steady transition to Socialism."

After the double talk about "democratic-dictatorship" and the familiar Labour Party phrases about step by step transition to Socialism, it was only to be expected that the term Socialism would be found to be used in the Con-

stitution to mean various forms of capitalist organisation. The following extracts bear this out:—

Article 5: "The ownership of the means of production in the People's Republic of China at present falls mainly into the following categories: State ownership, that is, ownership by the whole people; co-operative ownership, that is, collective ownership by the working masses; ownership by individual working people; and capitalist ownership."

Article 6: "State-owned economy is Socialist economy, owned by the whole people; it is the leading force in the national economy and the material basis on which the State carries out the Socialist transformation. The State ensures priority for the development of the State-owned economy."

"All mineral resources and waters, as well as forests, undeveloped land and other resources which the State owns by law, are the property of the whole people."

We see from the above that the "Socialism" to which the Chinese Republic is said to be advancing, is a misapplication of the term Socialism to State Capitalism.

Article Seven tells us that co-operation, too, is "Socialist economy."

Article Eight reads:—"The State protects the right of the peasants to own land and other means of production according to law"; while Article Twelve gives the same protection to the right of citizens "to inherit personal and private property."

Article Ten is especially interesting.

"The State protects the right of capitalists to the ownership of the means of production and other capital according to law."

"The policy of the State towards capitalist industry and commerce is: use, restrict and transform. Through control by administrative organs of the State, leadership by the State-owned economy and supervision by the workers, the State uses the positive qualities of capitalist industry and commerce which are beneficial to the national welfare and the people's livelihood; encourages and guides the transformation of capitalist industry and commerce into various forms of State-capitalist economy, step by step replacing capitalist ownership with ownership by the whole people."

"The State forbids capitalists to endanger the public interest, disturb the social-economic order or undermine the national economic plan by any kind of illegal activity."

One piece of unintended humour is that according to Article Twenty "the armed forces . . . belong to the people." Whenever the Chinese workers come into conflict with the armed forces of the emerging Chinese capitalism they should reflect on that grim jest.

Much of the Constitution is naturally taken up with constitutional and electoral organisation and with the usual high flown declarations of the "people's rights." All constitutions contain these latter trimmings and they mean nothing at all. The workers never get and retain elementary rights of trade union organisation, voting, forming political parties, and so on, without struggling for them.

The aims set by the Constitution contained in the articles quoted above have no relationship to Socialism, which is at present quite beyond the knowledge and acceptance of the vast majority of China's largely peasant population.

Their promised land is much more like the Attlee-Bevanite dream (or nightmare) of a rigidly government controlled welfare capitalism.

Let us hope that the Chinese workers may be spared that fate.

Correction

The article on Page 141 of the October issue should have been headed "World Government is not Socialism," not "World Agreement, etc."

THE CHANGING PUBLIC HOUSE

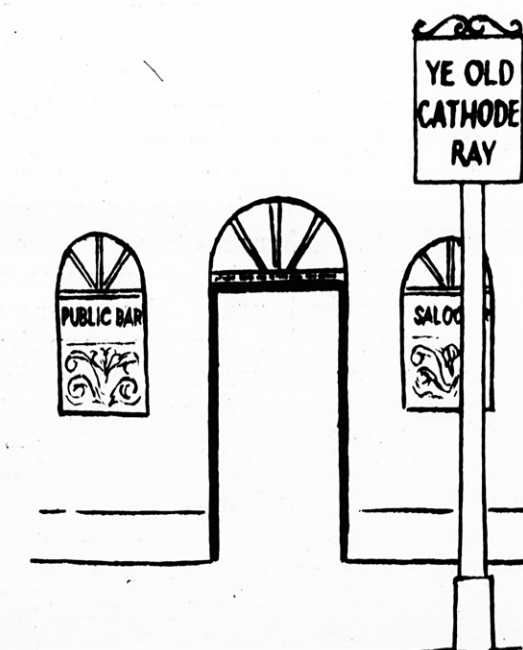
LAST year every man, woman and child in the United Kingdom drank twelve and a half gallons of beer, statistically speaking. In addition, we disposed of a pint and a half of spirits and a quart of wine each. The only thing to be said in our favour is that our fathers, 60 years ago, drank nearly three times as much on paper and, the child population being larger then, probably four times as much in practice.

Figures are hardly needed to show that people drink less nowadays. A drunk in the street or a man with a grog-blossom is a rare sight; the pubs are empty—not literally, of course, but certainly by comparison with other, quite recent times. The local that was once the Pantheon of the neighbourhood, with knees-up in the bar, a Saturday night overflow on the pavement and a fight now and again, is now a comparatively quiet place where people drop in for a glass and not much more. And in the more newly built suburban areas, pubs generally are few and far between. Today in Britain there is roughly one public house to every 600 people; 50 years ago it was one to 350, and a century ago one to every 100-odd.

It might look as if the two centuries campaign against the horrors of drink has worn resistance down. In fact, there is probably less "temperance"—the word should mean moderation, but has come to stand for a dogmatic extreme—less temperance today than there was in the 19th century, when its disciples wore blue ribbons and had every child sign the pledge whom they could lay their hands on. Most men and women drink, but not so much and not so often, and they do quite a lot of it at home. Those who visit pubs daily—ask for "the usual" and call the barmaid by her first name—are mainly older men. People under 40 go to pubs, but not as a habit. Their lives have different rhythms. That is what really has happened. Public houses and peoples' drinking habits have changed: the real change has been in the pattern of social life, to which institutions and attitudes are shaped and fused.

The true significance of the public house is a communal one. Every well-knit community has its centres, places where people of all sorts go to do business, hear news, form opinions and enjoy one another's company: the market place, the church and, since the Middle Ages in Britain, the inn. There have been and are others, like the coffee-house in the 18th century and the caff in our own generation, but each of them limited to particular social groups (the cafes in fact have a stratification of their own from arty haunts to good pull-ups for carmen). The pub accommodates many groups. Public bar, saloon, private bar and lounge, separated only by wooden partitions, are distinct milieus under the same roof.

The fact of modern counter-attractions to public houses is obvious. Fifty years ago there were no pictures, no radio, no speedways and so on; a good many people nowadays drink bottled beer at home while they watch the television. Something more than mere counter-attraction has caused the decline in public house life, however. It is worth remembering that music halls, the great



entertainment at the beginning of the century, were also places for drinking. Their successors, the cinemas, have no facilities for it.

A great deal of everyday social activity has taken place in pubs. Workmen ate and were paid in them—farther back, trade unions and friendly societies met in them. Shopkeepers and small businessmen went to private bars for transactions. Less obvious things, too: not so many years ago, housewives took bowls of vegetables into the locals and sat shelling peas or peeling potatoes with glasses of stout beside them. Public houses had their own football teams, with a pitch behind the premises and several hundred habitués to give support (the writer played for one, and a very good team it was). There are not many such teams now, simply because few pubs can raise them from the regulars.

Industrial and political developments have eliminated much of this activity. There usually is a canteen wherever more than a few people are employed, and a wages office as well. The late 19th-century war between the Conservative brewers and the temperance Liberals linked anti-Conservatism with disapproval of drink; the growing Labour movement set up Trades Halls and Committee Rooms, taking the meetings out of the pubs. The small tradesmen, forced into political participation by the near-omnipotence of combines and multiple shops, met in Conservative Clubs instead of public houses. Both ways, political parties helped to clear the bars. It is true also that the quality and amenities of everyday life have altered since those days when the pub exuded, to quote Trevelyan, "its promise of warmth and welcome on to the wet inhospitable street."

More than anything, however, there has been a falling-off in communal living and thinking. In modern industrial society, any sort of local community is exceptional. Apart from the family, which has disintegrated visibly in this century, and such exceptional cases as racial and political minorities, the only coherent groups are occupational and technical ones; possibly that is why the cafe, the small-group meeting place, flourishes now instead of the pub. The division of labour and the growth of cities where functions must largely be delegated and depersonalized have taken away much of the basis for communal activity. Law and order, education, charitableness, recreation, all are in the hands of profes-

sional specialists. The variety of experience that urban civilization apparently offers is too often variety only of vicarious experience. A man who says he is keen on sport nowadays is quite likely to mean that he does the pools or watches all the Arsenal's home matches.

One of the best literary pictures of the status of the pub in pre-urban communities is contained in George Eliot's "Silas Marner." Marner's appearance in the "Rainbow" is dramatic because he has never been there before, and so—nothing else is needed—lived in isolation. Discovering the theft of his gold, there is nowhere else to announce it but in the inn. The incident is the real climax of the story, the point where the recluse enters and is accepted by the community, and the inn is its symbol. Nowadays, of course, he would go to the police station.

Certainly some unpleasant things have largely disappeared from social life with the decrease in drinking. Sottishness has not much charm; nor has the sight of children dawdling for hours on public-house doorsteps while their parents are inside. The fading of these unedifying spectacles is usually put down to a change in peoples' outlook, as if outlook meant a kind of communal revelation. It is true that social attitudes about drinking have changed, but the change is effect, not cause. Given the growth of town life, the diminished need for community centres, and a hundred and one facilities for solving the "problem" of leisure, there is less drinking in public houses: consequently there are fewer drunkards and waiting children and, in time, a feeling that there is actually something disgraceful about both. Go to a village where life is still centred in the pub, and you will find the same attitude in reverse—i.e., that the amenities of town life are not just frivolous but wicked too. In this connection, it is worth mentioning that much of the anti-drink propaganda of a century or two ago was directed not against public houses but against gin shops. Hogarth's "Gin Lane" and "Beer Alley" series, commonly supposed to depict the horrors of drink, in fact aimed to show that beer was better in every way than gin.

The modern public house is more and more a shop where beer is sold, with perhaps some provision for amusement. The only places, apart from rural areas, where it retains something of its former character, are where there

is a single industry and so a community is formed by an occupational group—docklands, shipbuilding, mill and mining towns and so on. In those areas the pub has not changed very much, even in its architecture, fittings and compartments—figured glass, rococo partitions, horsehair settees and sporting prints, in contrast with the aseptic, tiles-and-chromium, one- or two-room buildings of the modern metropolis and its suburbs.

Our society is less and less a community, more and more an agglomeration of individuals. Reference has already been made to the handing-over of former communal functions to trained, authority-bearing specialists: the more important point is that responsibility has been handed over too. It is not only that impersonal powers manage, instruct, entertain and generally provide for people—the more vital aspect is that people no longer have much to do in any of those matters. That is why a happening like a flood or a railway disaster makes news by bringing out men and women spontaneously to help, nurse and clothe the victims: ordinarily those are services provided by institutions. The war produced a good deal of such communality and showed that, far from being dead, it is always ready to come through the surface of urban civilization.

The public house is what its name implies—a house for the publicum, the community; and a community is no more to be found in it than a fifty-shilling suit in the Fifty Shilling Tailors'. Is that a bad thing? It is nice to feel superior and think that people nowadays have better things to do than go to pubs; balance the rise of aspirin-taking against the fall of beer-drinking, and you may wonder what the better things are. The pub in itself does not matter very much, but the social circumstances which have changed its character do. Historians of the future will record ours as an era of amenity and progress. Perhaps, too, they will record it as the age of insecurity, personal as well as economic: an age of crowded but lonely people, knowing little communal obligation or sanction for behaviour. Advice bureaux, help pages, marriage guidance councils, huge unseen audiences for the opinions on everything of petty oracles . . . all these—and the aspirin-bottles—are the true monuments to today.

R. COSTER.

NOTES BY THE WAY

What goes on in Abyssinia

Outwardly the visit to Britain of Haile Selassie, King of Kings and Emperor of Ethiopia, may have the appearance of a courtesy call between two of the few remaining monarchies of the world. But it is an open secret that there are matters of more serious interest than renewing old acquaintance and revisiting Bath, where the Emperor lived during his exile after the Italian conquest of his homeland. The *Sunday Express* (17/10/54) reports that behind the scenes "a new treaty of friendship and alliance" is being negotiated. More information is given by the *Manchester Guardian* (12/10/54). According to this report the economic and political situation in Abyssinia is critical and the visits to Washington and now London are designed to obtain financial aid for development of resources in return for which strategic advantages can be offered to the Western Powers.

"The future of Eritrea and the Somalilands is the most important question affecting Great Britain and Ethiopia. Eritrea, uneasily federated to Ethiopia for a temporary period, has Red Sea ports of strategic significance for the Western Powers, faced with a revolutionary Middle East and an unpredictable East Africa. French Somaliland remains the only rail outlet to the sea. Italian Somaliland is under United Nations trusteeship until 1959. For the Emperor these lands with their large Somali, Dankali and Tigrean populations are a source of danger, and their future is of great importance. In 1953 an American military mission arrived to replace the Swedish mission training the Ethiopian army."

"There is oil in the northern provinces and the American Sinclair Oil Company is prospecting in the Somali desert in the east. The existence of uranium was confirmed in 1947. Ethiopia urgently needs loans, aid and capital investment. In return she can offer oil and mineral concessions."

In the meantime the Emperor, who is "at once king, dictator and government," has such problems to face in

maintaining his rule that it was at first thought that he could not safely leave the country.

Where the other capitalist Powers are busy furthering their interests Russia is not missing and would have its opportunity if the present regime collapsed.

"Soviet Russia, with an Embassy, a very fine information service, the best-equipped hospital in Addis Ababa and the ear of some of the best-educated men in the country would not be slow to build a bridge to Africa. Poverty and ignorance are widespread and the Coptic Church, the official Church with great temporal power, has old ties with the orthodox Church in Russia."

Those who have wondered why the allegedly anti-Christian Russian rulers have propped up the Church in Russia will see here one of the reasons. The religious link has already been useful to them as a means of approach and influence in the Balkans and may now prove to be useful for getting a foothold in Africa. For Russian capitalism as for the others trade and the gun may follow the Bible.

* * *

Are Strikes due to Communists?

Scoffing at the idea that the bus and dock strikes are caused by Communist agitation, the *Sunday Express*, always pleased to turn the attack against the Transport and General Workers Union, lays responsibility on the latter.

"The fact is that Mr. Deakin's huge union, nearly a million and a quarter strong, is totally unmanageable. Contact between its leadership and the rank and file seems almost non-existent even at local level." (*Sunday Express*, 17/10/54.)

Be that as it may the *Express* have an unanswerable point when they ask: "does Mr. Deakin really believe that ordinary working-folk with family responsibilities will risk their whole livelihood simply because hot words are spilt by a handful of agitators?"

Another point is overlooked when this charge is levelled at the Communists. They do not always support and encourage strikes. When the Russian Government's policy requires no strikes the Communist parties all over the world fall into line. After 1941, when the Russian Government was forced into the second world war, the British Communists were at the forefront of the drive to get the workers to work harder, and to refrain from striking. Strikes were denounced by the Communists as sabotage "against the nation"—just the same sort of language that is now directed against the Communists. The interesting point to notice is, however, that the number of strikes and strikers in the years when the Communists were the loudest mouthed patriots and were telling the workers not to strike were just as high as when the Communists changed to the new line of encouraging strikes.

In 1951, 1952 and 1953, there were just over 1,700 strikes each year and the number of days work lost by strikers rose from 1,710,000 days in 1951 to 1,797,000 in 1952 and to 2,142,000 in 1953.

This was a period when Communists were supporting strikes. But in the years 1943-1946, when the Communists were denouncing strikers, the number of strikes each year was greater than in any of the years 1951-1953, as also was the number of days work lost each year through strikes.

From which it may be concluded, as we might expect, that the workers strike against the effects of capitalism and it does not make much difference to their actions whether the Communists are for or against.

Troops and Dock Strikes

The following is from an article in the *Daily Mail* (19/10/54) in which Mr. Roland Hurman explains why the Tory Government has been able to avoid the hasty use of troops in dock strikes.

"Three times during the reign of the Socialist Government, under Mr. Attlee, the Cabinet sent troops into the London docks. Now, for the first time in three years of Sir Winston Churchill's Administration, the Government are pondering the problem of how long they can wait before ordering the men of the Armed Forces into action in defence of our peace-time front line."

"That Sir Winston has been able to wait for more than a fortnight before deciding on this drastic step is itself silent testimony to the growth of the country's prosperity since he took office."

"In the immediate post-war period of shortages, controls, and rationing, most cargoes had to be moved quickly to keep the nation fed and occupied. To-day we are much better off, but a trading country like Britain cannot continue indefinitely in the vacuum created by the dock strike."

* * *

The Motive behind Capitalism

Economists and City editors have a double line of propaganda against Socialism. One is that you can't do without the profit-motive because that is what makes the wheels go round. The other is that it is unfair to charge the capitalists with being money-grabbers for their real incentive is disinterested service in the community.

But last month the Chancellor of the Exchequer told business men that they should pay out less profit in dividends and devote more of it to developing their factories to meet foreign competition. This stung the City Editor of the *Daily Express* to the following:—

"Nonsense, Mr. Butler. Dividends are the life-blood of a free-enterprise economy."

"It was the promise of dividends that led the Adventurers of England to Trade Into Hudson's Bay. To-day it is a national asset worth £29,000,000."

"It was the promise of dividends that brought Mr. Rolls and Mr. Royce together. And it is the hope of dividends that encourages the investors of Britain to risk their money in industry."

"There is nothing wrong with high dividends provided they come from justifiable profits. Any more than higher wages are wrong if the workers deserve them."

"Both are high-degree marks on the barometer of a nation's prosperity." (*Daily Express*, 16/10/54.)

* * *

Mr. Morgan Phillips on Russia

Mr. Morgan Phillips, Secretary of the Labour Party, wrote for the *Daily Telegraph* about his impressions during the recent Labour Party delegation's visit to Moscow on its way to China. From the article in the *Daily Telegraph* of August 21, 1954, we discover that Mr. Phillips still holds the view he has expressed in the past, that British Labourism and the Russian Government have a common objective but differ about methods. He writes:—

"It may provide food for thought that the apparently sterner Stalin said to us in 1946 that both Britain and the Soviet Union were moving in the direction of Socialism—the Russian road shorter and more difficult, the British longer and involving no bloodshed. It can hardly be said that under a Conservative Government Britain is still on the road to Socialism; yet Malenkov was at least no less friendly."

Writing further of the difference between his talks with Malenkov and the talks in 1946 with Stalin, Mr. Phillips says of the earlier talks:—

"As I have said, we talked then of the two roads to Socialism—the Communist way and the Democratic way to which we in the British Labour Party are committed and

irrevocably dedicated. We gained the impression that notwithstanding ideological and other differences, it might be possible for the Communist and non-Communist world to live peacefully and prosperously side by side."

Mr. Phillips gives us a fascinating example of the way one confusion of thought is bound to lead to others and make understanding impossible. He early imbibed two ideas, one true the other false; the first that the Socialist idea involves international co-operation and harmony, the second that Socialism means State control of industry or State capitalism.

Having taken this initial leap in the dark Mr. Phillips' further progress in error and confusion was as certain as the sunrise. As both the Russian and the British Labour Governments had leanings to State capitalism they must, thought Mr. Phillips, have a common goal; they must be fellow-travellers on the way to Socialism. They ought also to be able to live in mutual peace and harmony. Since, however, they were not in harmony but in a state of cold war the cause might be, perhaps, a difference about method, the long and the short, the bloody and the peaceful roads to Socialism. Happy in his explanation of the problem Mr. Phillips is now convinced "that there are grounds for a renewal of optimism" in the matter of Anglo-Russian relations.

The cold truth is that Russia and Britain are parts of the capitalist world, trying to survive and expand in the cut-throat scramble. They do indeed differ about method, Russia relying more, and Britain less, on State capitalist methods of organising industry.

The reasons for their rivalries and hostilities now have no more to do with controversies about Socialism than the Crimean War of 100 years ago had to do with Russian and British controversies about who were the proper guar-

dians of Christians of the Greek Church under Turkish rule.

Mr. Morrison dissents

Mr. Herbert Morrison evidently does not share Mr. Phillips' illusions about mutual harmony between Britain and Russia and he wrote caustically in the June "Socialist Commentary" about those who think they can see Socialism in Russia:—

"We cannot delude ourselves into thinking that revolutions in other countries are deserving of our sympathy and support just because they are revolutions. . . . The idea still prevails that Russia has a Socialist economic system simply because so much is nationalised and planned; the existence of a dictatorship and the loss of individual freedom are regarded as unfortunate but irrelevant. As a result her every action—and the same now applies to China—is viewed with special indulgence."

New Naval War

Nearly 50 years ago the growth of the German navy led to the campaign in Britain to build more battleships to counter the threat. It is different today. Germany is only just about to begin re-armament and this time, so the British Government hopes, Germany will be an ally. But the British Government is still building warships, and three new cruisers are to be completed. But against Russia not Germany!

Mr. Noel Monks writes in the *Daily Mail* (16/10/54):—

"They will be the navy's answer to Russia's Sverdlov-class cruiser. This was revealed last night by the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. J. P. L. Thomas, in a speech at the R.N.V.R. club in London."

H.

BACK TO BACKS

FOLLOWING the tragic deaths of a father and five children unable to escape from a house fire in Birmingham the *News Chronicle* (13/8/54) reported that experiments will begin to fit asbestos hatches in the attics of the 11,000 Council-owned back-to-back houses and that the Council hopes that private landlords will fit them in the city's 26,000 "back-to-backs."

Disraeli is supposed to have said that in England there are two completely distinct nations, the one knowing nothing about the other; and another "wag" put it rather better by saying: "One half of the world doesn't know how the other half lives and if they do, don't care." Many Provincial visitors see London, and many Londoners see Margate and Brighton, and even see France, but the relative number of people who see round English industrial towns are few. When talking about travel who would ever think of saying: "I have explored Bolton, Blackburn, Burnley, Leeds, Halifax, Huddersfield, and Bradford?"

First of all it would be best to explain what back-to-back houses really are, as many Londoners and small town inhabitants may never have seen one. They do not exist in London now, and never in country districts.

Following the industrial revolution of the last century, the need for cheap compact houses around big industry was solved by building small four-roomed dwellings, two rooms up and two down, with a similar structure attached to its rear, but its front door facing the

opposite direction. There is no back exit, no front or back yard or garden. Many of these back-to-backs have no sanitary arrangements (some no water), and at the end of each street there are two or four toilets, to be used by the whole street community. On a nice warm Sunday morning a small queue will be seen sitting on the curb, in their shirt sleeves, awaiting their turn.

Standing on a hill outside Leeds you can see row after row of such houses, and the *News Chronicle* states that there are 26,000 in Birmingham alone. It would be interesting to find out numbers for many other English industrial towns.

Here again, to quote from the *News Chronicle* (13/8/54): "The hatches will probably be made from asbestos sheeting, which could easily be broken in an emergency. They will cost £2. . . ."

The only real solution is the demolition of all back-to-back houses, but that is impossible in the near future because of the housing situation."

Does this need any further comment, a country—the home of the Mother of Parliaments, and one of the "forward peoples," as distinct from the so-called "backward peoples," a country that is at present spending £2,500 million on rearmament, is unable to cure the back-to-back houses question?

The real tragedy is Capitalism—the cause of slum houses and all the rest of our troubles.

DAVID BOYD.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

The **Delegate Meeting** is being held at Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road (Near Victoria Station) on Saturday and Sunday, November 6th and 7th, commencing each day at 10.30 a.m. Social at Head Office on the Saturday evening from 7.30 p.m.

Hampstead Branch have changed the day and time of their outdoor meetings at the Whitestone Pond, Hampstead Heath. During the winter months the day will be Sunday and the time 11 a.m. Their previous meeting time—Friday evening—has been discontinued until next summer.

Glasgow. The City and Kelvingrove Branches are jointly running a series of meetings on Sunday evenings at the Central Hall, Bath Street, at 7.30. (Doors open at 7 p.m.) The first meeting is to be held on November 7th. Full details of this and other meetings appear under "Meeting Notices" in this issue.

Islington Branch are holding a Social and Dance at the Winchester Hotel, Archway Road, Highgate, on Saturday, 27th November. Admission Free. Members are assured of a happy evening.

Nottingham Branch has arranged a series of lectures by London speakers. Full details of current dates under "Meeting Notices." Good work is being done in the comparatively new branch and the meetings will no doubt meet with success.

Camberwell Branch has consistently held meetings at two outdoor stations, East St., Southwark, and Rushcroft Road, Brixton. The results at East St. (our all the year round meeting place) have varied taken over a long period, owing to opposition meetings ranging from good meetings with Lit. Sales around 8/- and collections of 4/- to small meetings with only three or four STANDARDS sold. Recently signs of a revival were shown when Comrade Gloss, of America, spoke. The audience was large and 8/6 worth of literature was sold. From then on and with the arrival of the Anniversary S.S. things have moved upwards. Our main set-back at this station has been the pre-occupation of the workers with the current problems of British Capitalism.

Our Rushcroft Rd. meeting has maintained a fairly high level of interest, although this is only a summer season station, literature sales average 2/4.

Largely arising from a visit of an Ealing Comrade we started a canvassing drive in June, this year, and we have found this also very worthwhile. It has the advantage of personal contact. Since we began about 20 new readers a month have been found and with fluctuations our present increased readership stands at 85.

The address of the Branch and time of meetings is on the back of this journal. We extend the usual Socialist welcome to all non-members and are always eager to hold discussions on matters of interest to them.

P. H.

ECONOMICS OF CAPITALISM—(continued)

NOW for a few words on the question of money. To know the relative value of an article we must give that value an independent form; a form apart from the form of the article whose value we wish to indicate. This we do when we say that there is ten shillings worth of value in 20 loaves. The value concealed in the loaves is put into the form of ten shillings and we are then able to compare the value of the loaves with the values of other articles whose value is expressed in a similar form. It is like comparing the weights of given quantities of soap, iron, and lead, by expressing their weights in hundred-weights, quarters, and pounds. The ten shillings is the price or monetary expression of the value of the loaves, or, in the language of economics, the value equivalent. As previously mentioned it represents a definite portion of gold.

Gold is the money commodity and the basis of all currencies to-day. Gold can only serve as the value equivalent because it is also a product of labour and has a value determined by the quantity of labour required to produce it. As the universal equivalent it gives a visible expression to the values of all other commodities, but to find out the relative value of gold you must reverse the relation and look upon all other commodities as the expression of the value of gold, an unending series.

Gold has only become the universal equivalent as the

result of the action of custom. In early times cattle, silver, and many other things occupied the part of universal equivalent, but owing to its handiness, durability and malleability gold finally replaced all the others as the generally accepted substance of money. It is obvious that the money commodity must be subject to little variations in value through wear and tear, and comprise in a small compass as much value as possible; gold fulfilled this better than anything else, and thus became the national and international medium of exchange.

Money has several functions and we have already indicated its function as a measure of value. As a medium of circulation it circulates commodities; commodities are transformed into money and the money received is transformed into other commodities, so the process goes on in an unending series in which commodities come into circulation and disappear; money remains in the sphere of circulation although it is occasionally hoarded for a time. Commodities drop out of circulation to be consumed but money is never consumed.

Another function of money is that of acting as standard of price—tons, pounds, and ounces of gold, a measure of the weight of gold, and as such it never varies. However prices may change, an ounce of gold is always an ounce of gold, in the same way as a yard measure is always a yard long.

For currency purposes money functions as money of account; coins of a certain weight, purity, and size are struck for the purpose of carrying about and making reckoning easier. Up to 1914 gold coins circulated in England as currency, and the following remarks apply to that period; the effect of the withdrawal of gold coins from circulation we will see later.

To continue then, on the pre-1914 basis. In those days the Mint price of gold, the amount per ounce which the Mint was always prepared to pay for gold, until England went off the Gold Standard (refused to pay in gold the face value of its bank notes), was £3 17s. 10½d. This was not really a price but a statement of the number of gold coins of the necessary weight and fineness which can be struck from a given weight of gold. 1869 sovereigns can be struck (or coined) from 40 pounds of gold, and, therefore, three sovereigns and a fraction (17/10½ in silver and copper) from one ounce. In practice people sold gold to the Bank for £3 17s. 9d. (the Bank price) and the Bank sold it to the Mint for £3 17s. 10½d. It is important to bear in mind that an ounce of gold is the standard, and is divided arbitrarily into £3 17s. 10½d. in a similar way to which a foot is divided into twelve inches and a circle into 360 degrees. Only the gold coin circulates at its value, its divisions are represented by silver and copper symbols. The latter have no direct relation to the value of silver and copper, and there was a strict limitation upon the amount of each that was legal tender. No matter how the value of gold might alter or prices change an ounce of gold always coined into £3 17s. 10½d., and the Mint would always pay this "price" for it. Gold sent abroad figured at this "price" less cost of transport and insurance.

In another function of money, as means of payment, it was found that gold could be conveniently replaced by paper symbols, bank notes. This symbolic money turned out to be a source of considerable trouble. Banknotes were printed in various denominations and engraved with a statement to the effect that the issuers would always pay their face value in gold on demand. A separate department of the Bank of England was set up for the sole purpose of dealing with notes, the Issue Department. This department kept in its vaults a quantity of gold, plus a small percentage of government securities, that covered every note issued; the notes were referred to as "gold backed." Thus a £5 note was backed by gold, exchangeable into gold at any time, and therefore as good as five golden sovereigns. Anyone could present a note at the Bank and had to be paid in gold if he demanded it. As long as gold circulates freely in currency, or, to put it another way, as long as there is a free market for gold, the gold-backed paper symbols played their allotted parts adequately.

The sum total of money current (or in currency) during a period is equal to the sum of the prices to be realised plus the sum of the payments falling due, minus the payments that balance each other and minus the number of times in which the same coins pass from hand to hand, in turn as means of circulation and means of payment. Money is current that represents commodities long since sold, and commodities circulate whose equivalent in money will not appear till some future date; debts contracted each day, and payments falling due on the same day, are not quantities that can be measured in order to foretell the exact amount of currency that will be required

on a given day.

As long as gold coin circulates a surplus of currency will find its way back to the bank and can be melted down for export or for other purposes. When part of the currency consists of the gold-backed notes we have described the surplus notes can be withdrawn and their gold backing subjected to the same process as gold coin.

After 1914 inconvertible bank notes (bank notes that would not be exchanged for gold at face value on demand) were issued, the celebrated "Bradburies," and then notes began to get out of touch with the sum of gold they were supposed to represent; currency became overstocked with a paper that could not be drained away. When crises came gold was demanded as the only form of wealth whose value remained dependable (hard cash) and higher paper prices were paid for gold. The decline in the value of paper money, as it was losing direct touch with gold, meant that more paper money was required for currency purposes and so, once inflation had commenced, the situation got worse until the time arrived when the curious position arose of an ounce of gold, equal to about £4 in gold coins, costing £8 in paper notes. We will conclude these remarks on money with a quotation from "Capital" relating to bank notes:—

"The State puts in circulation bits of paper on which their various denominations, say, £1, £5, etc., are printed. In so far as they actually take the place of gold to the same amount, their movement is subject to the laws that regulate the currency of money itself. A law peculiar to the circulation of paper money can spring up only from the proportion in which that paper money represents gold. Such a law exists; stated simply, it is as follows: the issue of paper money must not exceed in amount the gold (or silver as the case may be) which would actually circulate if not replaced by symbols. Now the quantity of gold which the circulation can absorb, constantly fluctuates about a given level. Still, the mass of the circulating medium in a given country never sinks below a certain minimum easily ascertained by actual experience. The fact that this minimum mass continually undergoes changes in its constituent parts, or that pieces of gold of which it consists are being constantly replaced by fresh ones, causes of course no change either in its amount or in the continuity of its circulation. It can therefore be replaced by paper symbols. If, on the other hand, all the conduits of circulation were to-day filled with paper money to the full extent of their capacity for absorbing money, they might to-morrow be overflowing in consequence of a fluctuation in the circulation of commodities. There would no longer be any standard. If the paper money exceed its proper limit, which is the amount in gold coins of the like denomination that can actually be current, it would, apart from the danger of falling into general disrepute, represent only that quantity of gold, which, in accordance with the laws of the circulation of commodities, is required, and is alone capable of being represented by paper. If the quantity of paper money issued be double what it ought to be, then, as a matter of fact £1 would be the money-name not of ¼ of an ounce, but of ½ of an ounce of gold. The effect would be the same as if an alteration had taken place in the function of gold as a standard of prices. Those values that were previously expressed by the price of £1 would now be expressed by the price of £2" (page 103-4, Glaiser edn., 1909).

GILMAC.

(To be continued)

Read—

THE WESTERN SOCIALIST

Monthly — Sixpence

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6 Months - - 3/- (Post free)

COMRADE NORMAN TAYLOR

It is with regret that we have to report the death of our Comrade, Norman Taylor, who died on August 27th after a life of suffering from one of the most pernicious diseases which this detestable system throws up. Despite this our comrade was active in the initiation of the Croydon Group and subsequently the Croydon Branch, which he was secretary of for many years.

We will all, I'm sure, share in expressing our sympathy and condolence with his wife, Comrade Rhoda, who we hope may find some measure of consolation in the fact, that her husband, Comrade Taylor, despite his enormous disabilities, was always on hand to carry out work for and behalf of the Party, which fell within his capacity.

M. A. C.

SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

at
52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET
(Clapham North or Clapham Common Tube Stns.)

A series of regular Sunday evening lectures will be held at Head Office throughout the winter. Commencing each Sunday at 8 p.m.

7th Nov. "FOOD AND MONEY"—R. AMBRIDGE.
14th Nov. THE SOCIALIST FUTURE—S. CASH.
21st " POVERTY AND BIRTH CONTROL—E. LAKE.
28th " SOCIALISM AND PLENTY—J. DARC.

DELEGATE MEETING SOCIAL

at
HEAD OFFICE
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6th at 7.30 p.m.
Refreshments Available Music and Dancing

FULHAM LECTURES

at
691, FULHAM ROAD, S.W.6
4th Nov. "DEVELOPMENTS IN S.E. ASIA"—F. OFFORD.
18th Nov. "LITERATURE AND THE M.C.H."—R. COSTER.
2nd Dec. (To be announced)
16th Dec. "THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY"—E. W. WILLMOT.

HACKNEY LECTURE

at
CO-OP. HALL, 197, MARE STREET, HACKNEY
on
Monday, November 8th at 8 p.m.
"SOCIETY AND THE H BOMB"—H. WAITE

ISLINGTON BRANCH

SOCIAL AND DANCE
to be held at
THE WINCHESTER HOTEL
ARCHWAY ROAD, HIGHGATE
7.30 p.m. on Saturday, 27th November
Admission Free All Welcome Buffet

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

NOTTINGHAM MEETINGS

Co-operative Hall, Parliament St., Nottingham
Sundays at 7 p.m.
28th Nov. "SOCIALISM AND PLENTY"—J. DARC.
(Further announcements later)

DARTFORD DISCUSSION

Friday, 12th November at 8 p.m.
Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield Street.
"SOCIALISM AND PLENTY"—J. DARC
December 10th:
"LITERATURE AND THE M.C.H.—R. COSTER

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP—Meets Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at Woodworker's Hall, Coupar's Alley, Wellgate. Correspondence to P. G. Cavanagh, 1b, Bennie Road, Dundee.

HOUNSLOW—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM—Group meets Wednesdays 10th and 24th November, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

ROMFORD—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.) Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

RUGBY—Group meets alternate Mondays 4th and 18th October at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

WATFORD—Group meets alternate Thursdays 4th and 18th November at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Road, (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

GLASGOW MEETINGS

(City and Kelvingrove Branches)

at

CENTRAL HALLS, BATH STREET

Sundays at 7.30 p.m.

(Doors open at 7 p.m.)

7th Nov. "MARX AND THE S.P.G.B.—T. MULHERON.

14th " "JAM TO-DAY"—J. RICHARDS.

21st " "ECONOMICS OF SOCIALISM"—J. HIGGINS

28th " "THE MYTH OF THE NATIONAL INTEREST"—
E. DARROCK.

5th Dec. "CLASS STRUGGLE"—A. SHAW.

DEBATE WITH PEACE PLEDGE UNION

at

ILFORD LABOUR HALL, HIGH ROAD, ILFORD

Wednesday, 17th November, at 7.45 p.m.

"WHICH WAY TO WORLD PEACE?"

For P.P.U.: F. MONKHOUSE.

For S.P.G.B.: W. KERR.

Chairman: Councillor GEORGE CAUNT.

Questions

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LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Mondays: Finsbury Square.

Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.

Thursdays: Tower Hill.

Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.

Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee at the Head Office or to a local branch.

BOREHAM WOOD

Will members and sympathisers willing to cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood contact:

I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove,
Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley, Birmingham.

BLOOMSBURY. Correspondence to Secretary. c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m., 4th and 18th November.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

BRIGHTON. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. I. Groves, 92, St. Georges Way, Peckham, S.E.15

CROYDON meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: H. J. Wilson, 7, Cyril Road, Bexleyheath, Kent. Tel.: Bexleyheath 1950.

EALING meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCELES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6., (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.). Business and discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

GLASGOW (City) meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halls, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 1st, 15th and 29th November, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Farmer, 46, Fernie Street, Glasgow, N.W.

HACKNEY meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Iveney, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

HAMPSTEAD meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Road Met. Stn.). Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware, Middlesex.

HIGH WYCOMBE Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.9 p.m., discussion after branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191, Bowerdean Road.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after branch business. L. H. Courtney, 53, Canonbury Park South, Islington, N.1.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

LEYTON Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

MANCHESTER Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 2nd, 16th and 30th November, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.: Sec. J. M. Breaky, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2. (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

PALMERS GREEN Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

ST. PANCRAS meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. LONDON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o. Head Office.

SOUTHEND meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

SWANSEA Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7.9.30 p.m., at Khavayam, Mansel Drive, Murtion, Bishopston. Discussion after branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 604 Vol. 50 December, 1954

CHRISTMAS GIFTS TO THE OLD-AGE PENSIONERS

NOTES BY THE WAY

ECONOMICS OF CAPITALISM

A SLIGHT CHRISTMAS CAROL

FIFTY YEARS AGO

REFLECTIONS ON THE DOCK STRIKE

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

Dear Old Pals

THE ANGLO-GERMAN LINE UP

WELL! WELL! SO THE GERMANS are Britain's Allies now! Dr. Adenauer himself has said "it is astonishing."

"Britain and Germany have signed a treaty to defend one another instead of attacking each other"—(*Sunday Express*, 24/10/54.)

It must be a great comfort to the people. After two most frightful wars to smash Germany down, the capitalists of Britain and America are now intent on building Western Germany up.

Those past the half-century mark, with a moment to spare for introspection, may well recall the scenes of days gone by. "Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag!" "It's a long way to Tipperary." "Keep the Home Fires Burning." The Recruiting Office in Whitehall packed with jostling crowds fighting to get into the army first. The Derby Scheme with its armet, German bakers' shops looted. "Society" ladies chasing about with white feathers. The Great Shell Shortages! Lloyd-George! Minister of Munitions.

The 1915 disasters, Lloyd-George, Prime Minister

The same Sunday newspaper which reported the news of the Anglo-German Alliance is serialising a new biography of David Lloyd-George.

"To-day's episode tells of a military disaster which caused grief and misery in nearly four hundred thousand British homes."

It is the story of Passchendale, the most stupid and disastrous blunder of the 1918 war.

Four hundred thousand men floundered through mud knee-deep to their doom, trying to capture a piece of land the size of Green Park, Piccadilly.

This was the area at which Haig's Chief of Staff, Kiggel, visiting the scene after the battle, broke down and wept, sobbing "Good God! did we really send men to fight in that."

That same Passchendale of which Siegfried Sassoon wrote:

"If I were bald, and fat, and short of breath
I'd live with scarlet majors at the base
And speed glum heroes up the line to death
You'd see me with my puffy petulant face
Gulping and guzzling in the best hotel
Poor young chap, I'd say, I knew his father well.
Yes! we lost heavily in that last scrap
And when war was o'er and youth stone-dead
I'd toddle safely home and die—in bed."

Months afterwards, years afterwards, Lloyd-George was asked, if he knew how idiotic Haig and Robertson really were, why he did not sack them out of hand. In his Memoirs he said he dared not take the risk, when the Press were supporting the High Command, which might have required a General Election.

This explanation may satisfy Mr. Owen and some of his readers. It will not do for Socialists. The Socialist Party has a very vivid recollection of those war years.

It was during 1915 and '16 when Haig was "speeding glum heroes up the line to death," that our public meetings were smashed up by hysterically-patriotic members of the British working class.

The self-same violently nationalistic propaganda-drunk workers who cheered Haig's ludicrous military blunders—booed the Socialist Party speakers who stood up to say that the war was for profits, and would bring workers nothing but disaster.

While nearly a million British soldiers staggered through a sea of mud in Belgium a tiny handful tried to fight through the sea of lies at home—the odds proved too great—the Socialist Party did the only thing possible, stood down until a few more workers came to their senses.

This is the real explanation of those harrowing events. Even two years afterwards, Lloyd-George could still win an election on "Homes for Heroes," "Make Germany Pay," and "Hang the Kaiser," though the victory was short lived. The political ignorance of the working-class was the ground upon which Haig could hound them to death.

It was this ignorance which blinded workers to their own interests. Understanding nothing of class society, the majority of workers thought they had something to

gain from the defeat of Germany. They thought it their interest to prevent German capitalists acquiring British trade. Most of them thought their employers their benefactors—not their exploiters. In brief, knowing nothing of Socialism they supported Capitalism—and inevitably its wars.

Lloyd-George's election stunts became notorious. The mere mention of "Homes for Heroes" got laughs for years, but, after many twists and turns, Baldwin, Ramsay Mac, Chamberlain and Co., the same old routine started all over again.

The same blunders were repeated in 1930/55 by military commanders who must not be mentioned because they have not yet "died in bed." 1939, a change of labels—but basically the same—and a working class which still did not know that society is divided into two classes, with opposing interests, marched, or now, was rushed, to the shambles in fast trucks.

By now, science had "improved" war. No need to rush to the front, the aeroplane dropped it on you. Still, the workers support their masters, although 60,000 registered objection to the war.

And now, after two doses, Britain and Germany are Allies, "pledged to defend each other against a common aggressor." What again? Yes! All over again.

And will all those who marched to smash Germany and "make her pay" rise up as one man in burning indignation at the futile squandering of life and wealth in two past wars, and cry aloud—"We will not fight for Germany, and mock our fallen comrades?"

They will not.

Until such time as a sizeable number of workers are Socialists, the people remain hydrogen-bomb dust for the modern Douglas Haigs.

HORATIO.

NOTES BY THE WAY



Meeting in King Street

It has happened, and all who said it could not be confounded. After more than 30 years of fawning and grovelling the British Communists have rebelled. Through

the columns of the *Daily Worker* they have dared to criticise the action of a representative of the Moscow hierarchy. It happened in the *Daily Worker*, on Wednesday, 10 November, 1954, when their correspondent, reporting the match at Wembley between the Arsenal and the Russian Spartaks, held that the Russian referee Mr. Nikolai Latyshev, gave a wrong decision. True, this is not the first time that the Communists and the *Daily Worker* have found themselves "out of line," but on past occasions—as for example the support of the war against Nazi Germany in 1939—it has been inadvertent, a momentary failure to reverse fast enough. But this time there was no withdrawal, no abject confession and apology, and the next day the correspondent coldly brazenly repeated his statement:—"From where I saw it, Mr. Latyshev was wrong."

The disputed decision caused uproar at the match and will, as the *Daily Worker* wrote, "be a talking point for many months to come." Now that international athletic contests are no longer games but State occasions for enhancing stupid national prestige the incident will no doubt add its little quota to national hatreds. Apart from that the moral appears to be that there is no fury equal to that of football fans whose team has been defeated by a better team.

Labour's Mock Indignation over Commercial T.V.

The Labour Party Opposition have been making the most of their opportunity of attacking the Government's decision to set up a commercial television system in rivalry to the B.B.C. In the House and in the Press they stormed about this sacrifice of "national" to private interests. The Labour-supporting *Daily Mirror* for days on end had hysterical front-page denunciations of what they said was a sell-out to Tory controlled money making interests. The Labour Party "decided to table a motion of censure on the Government for their refusal to introduce legislation to prevent political bias in the choice of groups given commercial T.V. 'plum' contracts." (*Daily Mirror*, 4/11/54).

And earlier Mr. Ness Edwards, Labour M.P., who had been Postmaster General in the Labour Government and therefore nominally responsible for the B.B.C., raged against the Tory decision on the ground that, "under the false plea of 'let the people decide,' this Government is allowing Big Business to decide what the people shall be allowed to see." (*Forward*, 24/7/54).

All of which is of course sanctimonious humbug. To start with what difference does it make from the standpoint of freedom from bias which group of financial and entertainment interests get contracts from the new Television Authority? It is stated by the Authority that any group contemplating applying must have financial resources running into three or four million pounds, so that only very wealthy groups of investors could be considered anyway, and such groups, whatever political leanings they have or if they have none at all, are and must be concerned with making a large profit out of it.

To which, the stock Labour Party reply is that the nationalised B.B.C. is, or can be, "above party" and concerned genuinely with giving expression to all views, including those of unpopular minorities. It is a plausible story, which, however, is shattered by the fact that for 30 years, irrespective of the Government in power, the B.B.C. would never agree to let the Socialist case of the S.P.G.B. be heard on the air. We don't expect to fare any better from a commercially controlled organisation but at least we can't fare any worse.

The Health Service versus Poverty

Like all reformists the men who conceived the idea of a National Health Service that was to be a radical cure for a social evil failed to reckon with the capitalist environment in which it was to operate. It required actual experience to teach some of them what Socialists told them beforehand. A chilling exposure is provided by "Hospital and Community," by Professor Thomas Ferguson and Dr. A. N. McPhail, published for the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust by the Oxford University Press and reviewed in *The Lancet* (12 June, 1954). The authors write in their preface:—

"It seems clear that further breakdown is sometimes precipitated by the transition—often sudden and dramatic—from the protective care of the modern medical ward to spartan conditions outside. Hospital treatment is usually only an episode in the general care of the patient; and the health services cannot stand in isolation from other social services. There is a limit to what Medicine can do to preserve fitness in the face of bad conditions of living and working."

The Lancet continues as follows:—

"Their study was made between 1950 and 1953. Of the 705 patients originally seen in hospital, 548 were seen three

months later in their own homes and 474 were seen two years after leaving hospital. By that time, 171 of the original group had died, and the remaining 60 were untraceable. Of the 474 seen after two years, 265 were working at their old jobs, though 30 were judged to need lighter work and 18 were unfit for work under ordinary conditions. Of 91 who had found new jobs, 3 were thought to be unfit for work, and 33 could have done their former jobs. Some 50 had done very little work, and 106 had done no work at all, since leaving hospital. Nearly a fifth of those in work at the end of two years were in jobs which were unsuitable, having regard to the demands of the job and the conditions of the men; and the proportion doing such unsuitable jobs was highest among those between the ages of 45 and 65, and among unskilled rather than skilled labourers. After two years, only 111 of these 474 men could be regarded as cured, though a further 193 had maintained the improvement achieved in hospital; 106 had not improved, and their health was unsatisfactory; 64 were worse than when they left hospital and some were going downhill. Moreover, 129 had been readmitted to hospital on more than one occasion during the two years. These figures gain life from the case-histories which FERGUSON and MACPHAIL quote. They write of gross overcrowding; of walls "soaking and falling down" or "running with water"; of parents and children sleeping in box-beds sunk in these soaking walls; of men with failing hearts housed at the top of tenements; of unskilled labourers with heart and lung conditions returning to their jobs as navvies; of stokers with angina shovelling coal; of men finding work within their compass, but being ordered to take on heavy extras by officious charge-hands; in short they describe unending waste—waste of life and health, waste of hospital resources. These authors are admittedly writing of an overcrowded industrial area where housing is notoriously shocking, and the paper by Professor LANE and his colleagues which we publish on p. 1229 shows that in Salford at least the picture of reablement and resettlement is far more cheerful. Nevertheless FERGUSON and MACPHAIL are able to quote surveys from other regions where the findings have been similar."

Among the remedies advocated by the authors is the need for better housing: "... in many cases rehousing offers the only hope of improvement."

The Lancet says:—"The living conditions described by these authors were destroying the health not only of the patients who were studied, but of their wives and children."

We can agree with the *Lancet's* conclusion that "this impressive study shows once more how our very intentness on cure can take our minds off prevention," but what the authors and the reviewer fail to realise is that what they describe are aspects of the poverty problem, and the only cure for that is the "prevention" of capitalism by abolishing it.

Religion, Handmaiden of Russian Capitalism

Capitalism in Britain, France and many other countries has had to face the problem of preserving religion and the church, because they are a useful aid to the ruling class, and of curbing their power when they threaten to become a "State within a State." Russia has followed a similar course and a new Government statement shows the dual attitude of simultaneously encouraging anti-religious propaganda while protecting the Church against too-zealous opponents who take literally the old Leninite denunciations of religion. The following is from the *Daily Worker* (12/11/54), in which their Moscow correspondent summarises a statement issued by the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party.

"Some Party officials and newspapers had gone too far in the campaign against religion by being offensive to the priesthood and churchgoers."

"These cases occurred when believers quite unjustifiably were considered politically unreliable. Often anti-religious

propaganda sunk to the level of trivial anecdotes.

"The central committee gave stern notice that it would in no circumstances countenance activities affronting clergy or believers.

"It was no good disregarding the fact that among loyal, active citizens there were some who held religious views. The Party's attitude toward such people should be tactful and considerate.

"It was foolish and harmful to have any suspicion about a Soviet citizen for his religious convictions.

"In Socialist lands, the Church played a different role than in capitalist countries where they supported the ruling classes, though this did not prevent some members of the clergy from sharing the viewpoint of the working class, the statement said.

"In the Soviet Union at present the clergy were generally loyal toward Soviet power—therefore, the battle should be only on ideological grounds.

"Mr. Khrushchov emphasised that correction of mistakes must not lead to the lessening of anti-religious propaganda "which is an integral part of the upbringing of the working masses." He said the Party could not be impartial and neutral toward religion."

* * *

This Overtime Business

The action of the dock strikers who fought to have overtime made voluntary instead of compulsory and whose leaders claimed a "complete victory" while telling them to go back and "do all the overtime you can," has drawn attention again to one of the lamentable developments of recent years, the widespread practice of overtime being a normal thing in industry. In past years trade unions fought continually to reduce hours of work with the intention of having more leisure, but since 1938

though standard hours have been generally reduced from 48 or 47 to 44 or less the average hours of work of adult men are actually slightly above the pre-war level, 47.7 hours in 1938 and 48.3 in April of this year. This is one of the reasons why, although wage-rates for the standard week have increased on average about the same as the cost of living, average earnings have risen considerably more; the hours worked in excess of the standard week of 44 hours are reckoned as overtime and paid at usual overtime rates.

A *Times* correspondent (26/10/54) wrote:—

"More overtime is being worked in Britain today than ever before in peacetime. In many industries employers rely on regular overtime to fulfil their commitments and workers rely on regular overtime to maintain their standard of living."

This development has come about with the tacit or open approval of many trade unions and was encouraged by the Labour Government as it is by the Government now in office, just as both Governments have sought to increase piece-work, another feature of capitalism that was once opposed by active trade unionists.

The irony of the situation is that whereas in the 19th century it was the employers and their newspapers that resisted workers demands for shorter hours it is now left to that organ of capitalism, *The Times*, to suggest (in an editorial 5/11/54) that "the excessive extension of systematic overtime is having a number of undesirable results," and to ask for inquiry into the possibility of reducing it.

H.

ECONOMICS OF CAPITALISM—(continued)

SURPLUS value is the pivot of Capitalism and the theory of surplus value was Marx's principal contribution to political economy. It solved the problem of the accumulation of wealth in a system in which value is exchanged for value, yet one portion of society gets enormously rich and the other pitifully poor.

We have already seen that commodities exchange at their values, that is, according to the labour required to produce them. The worker also possesses a commodity, his labour-power or physical and mental energy, which he sells to the Capitalist in return for wages. The value of the worker's labour-power, contained in his brain and muscles, is determined in the same way as the values of other commodities, by the labour time used up in producing it. This may sound strange as labour-power is not an article that can be seen, like a chair or a table. It is the stored-up energy in the human body, and it is only expressed when in action producing something like a chair or a table; it is represented by the finished chair or table. It is not paid for until it has been in operation producing something, and even then only for the time it has been in operation producing.

The worker's labour-power comes from the food he eats, and he must have clothes to wear and somewhere to sleep in order that this labour-power may be conserved and capable of functioning productively. He must also be able to bring up children to replace him as a producer when he is worn out. The cost of production of labour-power is determined by the cost of the food, clothing, shelter, and so forth, that is necessary to enable the worker to do the particular kind of work required. The

value of labour-power is therefore equal to the value of what the worker needs in order to live and bring up a family. The worker sells his labour-power by the week or the month for a sum of money that enables him to buy what he needs in order to live, and in getting these things he gets the full value of his labour-power; value has been exchanged for an equivalent value.

In working for the capitalist the worker produces commodities that, although sold at their values, yet realise a profit for the capitalist, in spite of the fact that the values of the commodities are determined by the quantity of labour required to produce them.

It may be wondered where the profit comes from when all commodities, including the workers labour-power, exchange at their values. The answer to the riddle is a simple one but it is concealed by the buying and selling system. The answer is that the labour-power the worker sells differs from all other commodities in that its "consumption" results in a greater value than itself. Labour-power in action produces more value than the value of the food, clothing, and other things upon which its own value is based. If it costs in money, say, £5 to purchase what will keep the worker for a week, then, in the course of that week, he will add value to products far in excess of £5, otherwise he would not be employed. The difference between the £5 the worker gets and the greater value he produces is the source of the capitalists' profits.

Thus by employing workers the capitalist makes a profit, and, generally speaking, the more workers he employs the more profit he makes. Although the

worker is able to get the value of his labour-power the worker is robbed in the course of the productive process because more value is produced by him than he receives in wages. While he is producing commodities the worker is also producing surplus-value for the capitalist.

We have seen that the worker sells his labour-power at its cost of production, the value of his means of subsistence; if half a day's labour is sufficient to reproduce the value of this labour-power then the value, or price, of a full day's labouring is equivalent to the value of the product of half a day's labour. The other half of the day **the labourer works for nothing, gives his labour free.** Here Marx distinguishes the first half of the day's work as necessary labour, labour necessary to reproduce the workers' cost of subsistence, and the second half of the day's work as surplus labour, or surplus-value. Out of this surplus-value comes rent, interest, profit, taxes, the means to replace worn out means of production, and the means to expand production. After rent, interest, taxes, and the personal needs of the capitalists have been met, as well as any other incidental expenses, the amount of surplus value (previously turned into money) left over is invested in fresh means of production, that is to say, it is converted into capital; it carries on, in ever growing volume, the process of producing value and surplus-value.

Although the term "capital" is applied to instruments of production of all kinds, these instruments only become capital under special conditions; these conditions are that they shall be employed for the purpose of producing commodities whose sale will realise a profit to their owners. A machine is not capital just because it is a machine; it only becomes capital under social conditions where it is used to extract surplus value from the worker. All modern productive processes commence with the investment of money; it has even become a general conviction, in spite of the contrary evidence of history, that there cannot be any production without money; yet money is only a link between the production and consumption of articles and only exists in social systems where there is buying and selling, and even there, is limited to those articles that are bought and sold, commodities.

The capitalist buys buildings, machinery, raw materials and labour-power, and then the production of commodities commences. Thus originally all capital is money; it is money invested for the purpose of profit. In the finished commodity the value of the buildings, machinery, and raw materials is passed over intact, and for this reason Marx calls the capital invested in these things "constant capital." Thus if the total value of these three items over a period amounts to say £20,000 then the finished articles during the period will only contain £20,000 worth of buildings, machinery, and raw material. Of course, in practice, buildings and machinery only give up their values piecemeal; for example, a machine that wears out in five years gives up, or passes over, to the yearly product one fifth of its value each year. With labour-power the position is entirely different. The worker carries over the value of the constant capital to the product and also adds fresh value, the quantity of which is determined by the amount of time he takes to produce the commodity; Marx defines capital invested in labour-power, wages, as "variable capital," because the quantity of value it adds varies according to a number of conditions.

We have already shown that the wages the worker receives in return for his labouring are not the equivalent of the fresh value he adds to the commodity, but a much lower figure than this. The peculiarity of labour-power, and the secret of the accumulation of capital, is that labour-power in action produces a greater value than it itself possesses. The value of the finished commodity, then, is equal to the values of the buildings, machinery, raw materials, and labour-power plus the surplus above the value of labour-power.

This surplus-value is the portion out of which the capitalist gets his profit, and which enables him to go on expanding production; the greater the relative portion of surplus-value he extracts from the worker, the greater the capacity of capital to expand. It is the real reason for the existence of capital. The greater the expansion of production then, generally, the greater the number of workers the capitalist employs, and the larger grows the absolute quantity of surplus-value. It is only out of the workers' labouring that the capitalist grows rich and capital accumulates. Hence between capitalist and worker there is an antagonism of interest; the capitalist tries to increase the relative quantity of surplus-value extracted from the labour of each worker, while the worker tries to diminish it by increasing the price he receives for his labour-power. The capitalist, owing to an increase in the productiveness of labour, may get more this year than last and yet pay the worker higher wages, still the relative portion of the total production taken by the worker, as represented by his wages, is smaller. The increase in the worker's wages has not kept pace with his increasing productivity; he is more exploited now than he used to be.

The aim of the capitalist is to accumulate capital on an ever-increasing scale; for this purpose there must be a corresponding expansion of the market for commodities; the thirst for markets becomes unquenchable and a source of conflict between national groups. In their feverish and insane scramble to get rich, money is invested in productive undertakings that periodically glut the markets; masses of commodities remain unsold and crises develop that ruin investors and put workers out of work, progressively reducing the buyers and accentuating the crisis. Commodities, for which starving and ill-clad people are badly in need, deteriorate or are destroyed. The effects of crises eventually slow down production until the commodities that are stopping up the pores of circulation trickle away; then production is once more stepped up and the way is prepared for another crisis. Periodical crises and unemployment are two problems the capitalist has been trying to solve for over a hundred years but both problems continue to exist. They are not solvable under Capitalism; they are rooted in the system of private production for an unpredictable market. A considerable influence on the production of crises is the introduction of labour-saving machinery and methods. As we have already shown the source of profit is the exploitation of the worker and hence the capitalist aims at increasing this exploitation as much as possible by getting a larger product with a smaller expenditure in wages; mass production methods is an instance of this, demanding huge productive units employing a relatively small number of workers turning out commodities in bewildering quantities. But it must be remembered that profit only comes out of the worker's unpaid labour, and therefore, there is a limit

to how far the capitalist can go in dispensing with workers.

The rate of profit on capital invested does not indicate the extent of the surplus-value produced by the worker. The rate of profit and the rate of exploitation, that is, the rate of surplus-value, are quite distinct. If a capitalist invests say £20,000 in a year as constant capital (machinery, raw materials, etc.), and £5,000 as variable capital (wages) and the value of the year's product is £30,000; then the profit on the total capital invested is £5,000, that is 20 per cent. The capital invested in wages, however, is only £5,000, for which a value of £10,000 has been freshly produced (the £20,000 constant capital has been incorporated in the product unchanged). The rate of exploitation is £5,000 beyond the £5,000 invested in

wages, that is 100 per cent. Thus, if the enormous increase in the quantity of capital that has to be invested in buildings, machinery, and raw materials now-a-days caused a fall in the rate of profit, it would go hand in hand with an increase in the rate of exploitation. In other words the legalised robbery of the workers grows. In fact, the rate of profit does not fall.

What we have put forward in these articles is only an outline of some of the ideas contained in Marx's *Capital*. Numerous professors of political economy have attacked these ideas, in spite of which the main propositions still hold the field, 80 years after the book was published.

GILMAC.

A SLIGHT CHRISTMAS CAROL

SCROOGЕ buttoned his overcoat and picked up his *Chronicle*, said goodnight to the office and left. This was not the Ebenezer Scrooge who said "Humbug" and disliked Christmas but later had a change of heart and died in the workhouse through giving all his money away: this was Stan Scrooge, who travelled on the Northern Line.

He walked home briskly from the station, pleasurably noting seasonable signs everywhere; the inviting tins of pudding and turkey in the grocers' and the sprigs of mistletoe round the price-tickets, dear old Santa Claus in the Co-op doorway, Frankie Laine singing "Silent Night" in the radio shop in the next street. There was a fresh, crisp layer of snow, and at the corner by the loan-office it was patterned with innumerable converging foot-prints, as though a pageant of sainted Wenceslases had passed, full of optimism and inspiration. For it was Christmas Eve, the time when men the whole world over feel the warmth of peace and goodwill towards one another. Scrooge passed a paper-boy. The lad, with his glowing cheeks and bright eyes, was the incarnation of the Christmas spirit; his voice fairly rang with it as he shouted, "Thirty more terrorists killed! Read all about it!"

Yes, it was a season of enchantment, Scrooge thought as he let himself into his lodgings. Three Christmas cards, and toad-in-the-hole for dinner; then he put on his slippers and sat by the fire to read his paper. The fire made him drowsy. He leaned back in his chair and folded his hands. In a few moments he was asleep.

When he awoke, the fire had burned down. Scrooge looked at his watch; it had stopped. At that very moment, the clock in the hall began to strike. He counted the chimes—twelve o'clock! Fancy sleeping all that time! Scrooge would have leaped from his chair in dismay, but another sound caught his attention. It was the sound of clanking chains.

Scrooge did not immediately think of ghosts. He had read books published by the Rationalist Press, and therefore despised superstition. In fact, he wondered why his landlady was up so late, and what she was doing. His emotions asserted themselves, however, when the noise ascended the stairs and entered his room. The chains were attached to a shrouded figure which pointed at Scrooge. He suddenly remembered something.



"This happened to someone in my family," he said. "Heard my grandfather talk about it. You're the Ghost of Christmas Past."

The ghost inclined its head.

Scrooge sniffed. "Well, I'm nothing like him, you know. Not much to unearth from my past. A girl or two and that's all."

As far he could judge, the ghost shrugged its shoulders before it beckoned him to the window. To Scrooge's surprise, the window was open; to his greater surprise, the two of them floated out. Astonishment over, it seemed a quite natural way of travelling—certainly a satisfactory one, because in seconds they descended several miles away, at a place Scrooge recognized immediately. The biggest football ground in London; broad daylight, 60,000 people, and one team breaking away down the centre. The ghost pointed to a spot in the crowd and drew Scrooge towards it. Half a dozen young men, enjoying one another's company as well as the game.

"Why," said Scrooge, "that's me! And old Johnny Dunn! And—why it's that match against the Germans: those are the German chaps we got talking to! My word, that's a few Christmases ago! Before the war, that was."

The ghost put a finger to its lips. The game was nearly over. They watched the lively conversation, listened to the warm farewells at the end and the two young Englishmen talking as they went off together. They heard Johnny Dunn praise the Germans as decent fellows, and Scrooge saying well, they were human beings just the same, weren't they? Johnny said that if you thought about it you could see the ordinary people of the world wanted to live in peace. And Scrooge said that was it; the politicians began wars and the common people had to fight them.

It was pretty to hear them. The older Scrooge, slightly puzzled, was led away by the ghost, over rooftops again until they came to a red brick building in a main road. A lot of young men were walking in and out of the building, or talking on the pavement. Among them, Scrooge saw himself.

"I know that," he said. "It's the first Christmas of the war. Just before Christmas, really—when I went to register for the army. And look—that's just what happened! That fellow talking to me outside the Labour Exchange—I remember him well. Wouldn't go in the army—just said he wouldn't kill other working men. Bit queer, he was."

They drew near. Scrooge saw that he was talking excitedly. "Ordinary people like us? Don't talk rubbish!" he was saying. "Nothing like us, the Germans aren't. Arrogant and domineering, that's their national character. Didn't you hear on the wireless last night..." The other man looked sad rather than angry, and Scrooge felt rather uncomfortable. He felt the ghost was looking at him oddly too, and was glad when they passed on.

A recent Christmas, and Scrooge again condemning a nation—quoting books as well, sitting in his penultimate fiancée's parlour. This time the Russians, and Joan was full of admiration as he explained about Pan-Slavism, the Russian character, and the menace of Marxism. The spectator Scrooge felt rather proud of himself.

"There," he said to the ghost, "nothing unreasonable about that, anyway. And you can't see me fraternizing with any ruddy Russians!"

The ghost took his arm. A few moments, and they were in a theatre. Christmas 1943: Scrooge, on leave, was in the stalls. A fat comedian in lounge suit and panama was speaking solemnly from the footlights. Our gallant allies; their courage, the bond between our two nations; in their honour, and by special request, he would sing "My Lovely Russian Rose." Scrooge watched himself applauding enthusiastically. As the scene faded, he turned to the ghost.

"You're too clever," he said indignantly. "I've a good mind..."

The ghost held up its hand, and again took him by the sleeve. He did not know the time of the scene he was now shown. It was a street of houses, almost totally enclosed from the light, the sky like a strip of faded bunting. The people were ill-clothed and wretched, their children underfed and joyless; dankness and grime so pervaded the whole surrounding as to form a grey texture on the hopeless faces. Scrooge had never known hunger, and he was horrified. He turned to speak to the ghost. It had gone. He turned again, and the narrow street, too, had gone. He was in his own room, standing near

his chair. Bewildered, he sat down and, without intending, fell asleep almost at once.

He was awakened again by the clock. As he opened his eyes, he saw that someone was standing there, huge and jolly, holding a flaming torch.

"Ah! Awake at last!" said the ghost paternally.

"Christmas present?" asked Scrooge.

"The very same."

"More levitation?" said Scrooge.

It shook its head. "A view from the window, that's all: a mere glimpse of the world around us."

The window was open again. With the ghost at his elbow, Scrooge looked out. He saw a church hall, drab and bare as those places are. It was snowing slightly, powdering the people who stood in a shuffling, shabby line at the door. Most—not all—of them were elderly. Inside the hall, they advanced one by one to a desk where a man was giving money away. A card said: "Welfare Officer."

"What's this?" said Scrooge.

"Ah," murmured the ghost, "you don't recognize the name. The Welfare Officer—otherwise known as public assistance, the R.O., and even—disrespectfully, of course—the bunhouse."

"I thought you were showing me Christmas Presents?" said Scrooge.

"Indeed I am."

"Get away," said Scrooge. "This is what your silent partner was showing me last night. Years ago, this. You don't hear of people being on the R.O. nowadays."

"My word," said the ghost heartily, "you don't know much, do you? Thousands of 'em—thousands."

"Really?" asked Scrooge. "But I thought things had improved."

"You'd be surprised," said the ghost. "A good hundred thousand still call at the R.O. You'd better see this, too."

It flashed its torch. For a moment Scrooge was dazzled. When he recovered, he saw a bleak, sombre group outside a bleak, sombre building. He asked the ghost if it were a workhouse.

"Dear me, no," said the ghost. "These are free men with money—a little, at any rate—in their pockets."

"I don't know it," said Scrooge.

"Of course you do," said the ghost. "Ever hear of good beds for working men? This place is full of 'em."

Scrooge stared. "Do you mean..." he began to ask.

"Sure," said the ghost. "And the firm which owns this lot pays very handsome dividends, especially nowadays. . . . We've hardly started yet, though. I'll show you something else."

He did. He showed Scrooge poverty he never knew to exist, housing he never knew to stand. Sordidness, wretchedness, degradation—Christmas Present could show them all. Scrooge felt in turn horror, incredulity and anger. Finally he forgot the ghost's presence, and was scarcely aware when the window closed and he was led back to his chair. Before he fell asleep, he saw the ghost beaming at him and heard it saying: "If it gets you like that, you ought to find the cause, you know. . . ." But Scrooge was too tired to hear. He fell asleep.

He dreamed that he talked with the Ghost of Christmas Present. What was the point of this harrowing

(Continued on page 169)

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

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CHRISTMAS GIFTS TO THE OLD AGE PENSIONERS



THE vote-catching of the professional politicians determined at all costs to get power for themselves and their party is an unseemly business at all times but the way the Government and the Opposition exploit the needs of the pensioners in the hope of catching their votes at the next election is more than usually indecent. Fifty or a hundred years ago when the aged poor were stowed away in workhouses or their gratitude cheaply

bought with private and organised charity the votes of the men had a certain importance but as worn out workers then died much faster than they do now the vote-catching element was of less account. But now they live longer, the women have votes as well as the men, and the total voting strength of the Tory and Labour parties is so evenly matched that it matters very much which party captures most of the vote. So as each general election approaches we witness the parties parading the hardships of the poverty-stricken pensioners in the verbal and statistical battle to prove which government of skinflints holds the palm for callousness, the one now in office or its predecessor.

Of course to read the heart throbbing speeches of the combatants one might be led to believe that there really is something to choose between them, but the facts belie it. Neither the pre-war governments, nor the Labour Government after the war nor the present Government has provided or will provide more than a miserly sum barely sufficient to help keep the pensioners alive.

A special correspondent of *The Times* (22/10/54) reviewed the post-war history of pension and assistance rates and showed how cheeseparingly each government has behaved. The original rates of pension fixed in 1946 gave 42/- for a married couple. It was, says the correspondent, fixed as a "Spartan" standard "somewhat less generous than the standard provided by national assistance during the past six years." The correspondent then measures the increases of the rates since 1946 against the rise in the cost of living, but austere using as yardstick not the rise of the cost of living of workers in work because that includes the more-than-average increase in the price of alcohol and tobacco "and other 'non-essentials'," but a more restricted measure based on "subsistence" costs. He finds that by 1948 the purchasing power of pensions was already eight per cent. below the level of 1946, by 1952, in spite of higher pension rates the rise in the cost of living had cut the value of pensions by 11 per cent., and today what they will buy is 15 per cent. below the original level. "In terms of 1946 purchasing power benefits in 1954 should have been 64/- for a couple and 39/6 for a single person, against 54/- and 32/6 actually."

Of course the responsibility for this miserable state of affairs, which will not be materially improved by the present Government's increases nor by those of any future Labour or other Government administering capitalism, rests on the pensioners themselves along with the rest of the working class. They vote for capitalism and their position is one of the consequences of the system they vote for. But even on the short-sighted view of making the best of the capitalism they vote for they should at least refrain from feeling grateful to the Labour and Tory Governments for the mean-spirited "improvements" grudgingly handed out. If the pensioners are content to sell their votes why sell them so cheaply?

An English general once coined the phrase, with reference to old soldiers, that a grateful country will never forget you. With some amendment this is true for the old-age pensioners. If they make themselves sufficient of a nuisance their Labour and Tory self-styled benefactors may be induced to raise pensions again up to or even beyond the insultingly low purchasing power calculated by Beveridge in 1946.

A SLIGHT CHRISTMAS CAROL—continued from page 167

panorama? Scrooge demanded. Because you're going to change it, said the ghost. By myself? said Scrooge. You and millions more, replied the ghost. But what causes all this? Scrooge asked. You tell me, said the ghost. A lot of it's human nature, said Scrooge. Human nature changes, the ghost replied. I suppose part of it's the system, Scrooge said. What do you know about the system? asked the ghost. Not much, said Scrooge; was me and the Germans a part of the system? Your nationalism, yes, said the ghost. And the bunhouse, the squalor and the wars; you don't know it yet, and things won't change much till you do know it. All right, said Scrooge, maybe you're right: what can I do about it? You must first understand, said the ghost. Scrooge repeated himself: What can I do? Understand, said the ghost. Understand, understand, understand...

The clock struck twelve, and Scrooge awoke from his dream. Before him stood the Ghost of Christmas Yet-To-Come. It moved aside, and Scrooge was alarmed. His room had gone, and he, his chair and the ghost seemed suspended above a crowd of people. The ghost's touch reassured him, and he looked down.

The people looked different, strikingly yet in a way that Scrooge could not identify for a time. His final realization came so suddenly that he burst out: "Why, don't they look happy!"

"They do, don't they?" smiled the ghost.

"Look as if they've all become millionaires," Scrooge went on.

"Strangely enough, they have no money," said the ghost.

"No money?" Scrooge was disbelieving. "Get away—they're not poor."

"Indeed they are not. But they have no money."

"Go on with you," said Scrooge impatiently.

The ghost pointed, singling out a man. Scrooge watched him. "Why," he said indignantly, "he's pinching a pair of shoes. He walked into that shop-place and took them—bold 'as brass, too!"

"They are his," said the ghost calmly.

Scrooge sat open-mouthed with bewilderment. The ghost pointed to a place where a few men and women were working. "Ah," said Scrooge, "that's good stuff they're making. Taking their time, though. Which one's the foreman?"

"Everyone makes good stuff," said the ghost firmly. "And there's no foremen."

"No foremen? But they'd do what they liked!" cried Scrooge.

"They are doing what they like. They are making good things."

Incredible, Scrooge thought. He wondered if everyone had sufficient, but the evidence was before him. Nobody was opulent, but everyone was prosperous; nobody superior, but everyone satisfied. He asked question after question of the ghost; the answers were shown, not told him. The language itself had changed through the disuse of innumerable words. Worship, sell, steal, envy, profit—hundreds of words that Scrooge heard every day were archaisms to the people he watched now. Others, like war and business, were preserved only for the convenience of historians and word-spinners, as are chariot-racing and alchemy in Scrooge's day.

He realized suddenly that the scene began to fade. Clutching the ghost's sleeve, he begged an answer to only one more question. They began to descend through space, and the uprush of air made speech difficult. Shouting, leaning on the ghost, Scrooge demanded: "What Christmas Present said—something I can do to bring it nearer?"

The ghost's voice was becoming distant, but still was clear. "Understand—first you must understand," it said. Scrooge pressed closer. "What can I do—do?" he bawled. The voice floated back, as the floor of Scrooge's room rushed towards him.

"Understand... understand... understand!"

R. COSTER.

A SOCIALIST TOUR

The following brief account of the visit to this country of two American colleagues is reproduced from the September-October *Western Socialist* as likely to be of interest to our readers.—Ed. Com.)

Fulfilling the ambition of many years, two American comrades took a two-week trip to Britain to meet the members of the Socialist Party of Great Britain and participate in their activities.

Never to them did life in the Socialist movement seem more momentous and meaningful than those two weeks.

Here are a few of the highlights.

While flying across the ocean, the comrades engaged a fellow plane passenger in an intensive (12-hour) explanation of Socialism. When the plane landed at Shannon, Eire, he gave them a dollar for a *Western Socialist* subscription; a few hours later, when the plane landed at London, he decided to join company with them for the day, meet the SPGB comrades, and attend the outdoor meeting at Hyde Park.

From the time they landed at London airport, and were met by two wonderfully patient comrades with motorcar and motorcycle and driven to an inviting home for a most refreshing reception, until they left Prestwick airport two weeks later with friendly farewells from Glasgow comrades, they were simply overwhelmed by the sheer warmth and cordiality of the comrades. Everywhere they went they received a grand welcome, and the hospitality in the homes was genuinely gracious. A welcoming social was held at the Head Office, London, at which about 150 comrades exuberantly expressed themselves in group dancing, singing and discussing—for a most enjoyable evening.

The afternoon of their arrival, the comrades headed for their first outstanding destination—Hyde Park. There they met a goodly number of comrades and saw some SPGB speakers in action. They had little time to listen for, in response to persistent requests, they took the stand to speak to large and attentive audiences. The crowds at this and other outdoor meetings at which the comrades

spoke, looked and acted much like those on Boston Common and asked similar questions. However, at every meeting, they asked about conditions in U.S., the possibility of Socialist expression, the influence of "McCarthyism." Opposition came mainly from a few vociferous Communists; heckling was far less than anticipated, and there was usually a round of applause for Socialism.

Starting with the meeting at Hyde Park, the comrades were almost completely absorbed in Socialist activities. In the fifteen days in Britain they spoke at eight outdoor meetings (Hyde Park 2, Lincoln's Inn Field 3, East End Market 1, Portsmouth 1, Glasgow 1), ten SPGB Branch meetings, one Executive Committee meeting, and a lecture at Workers' Open Forum, Glasgow. Besides these organized meetings, there were numerous group discussions with comrades until the wee hours of most mornings. It was inspiring and instructive to listen to and participate in the critical and interesting discussions on various aspects of Socialist theories and analyses. At every branch meeting the need was stressed for closer co-operation, correspondence between the overseas comrades, articles for the WS. Emphasized was the fact that WE ARE AS ONE and WE ARE NOT ALONE.

While in London an extremely encouraging message was received from a Glasgow comrade stating that a 17-year-old member had just appeared before a Tribunal and had been exempted from military service. "Part of my defense on behalf of the comrade was the production of a copy of the January, 1945 *Western Socialist* (in which appeared a most effective article dealing with a Socialist analysis of war by the young defendant's mother). All the Glasgow members present at the Tribunal agreed the WS was a very powerful card to play."

A meeting with two members of the Editorial Committee, both of whom had helped edit the SOCIALIST STANDARD for more than 30 years, proved very valuable. There was an exchange of information, helpful suggestions were offered, and closer cooperation in the future was assured. Most important was the fact that surplus articles would be made available for *The Western Socialist* thus enhancing the possibility of its monthly issuance.

To reciprocate in a small way for the splendid co-operation by the SPGB with the WSP throughout its existence, the American comrades made a donation toward launching a fund to employ a full-time paid organizer. This project, which was presented to the Executive Committee for consideration, received a very favourable response wherever the comrades travelled. Incidentally, while in Glasgow, a comrade made a generous donation to the WSP.

A fascinating trip through the heart of England was made possible by the splendid cooperation of a Lancashire comrade who drove 215 miles to London in his "jalopy" and then travelled back with the comrades through Oxford, Warwick, Stratford on Avon, Litchfield, Kenilworth, and the Midlands to Burnley where wonderful hospitality awaited them. While plenty of the countryside was beautiful, a perpetual pall of blackness and misery seemed to hang over the entire industrial area. Much seemed to remain just as Engels described it in 1844. The stone barrack-line slums were everywhere; the smoke seemed to darken everything.

The trip to Burnley made possible a hasty visit to

Manchester where, within a few hours, a meeting at the home of a comrade was arranged. About 25, among them a charter member of the SPGB, met for a stimulating discussion of Socialist problems.

One of the most inspiring incidents of the visit took place at a comrade's home. There, in a kitchen, a group of comrades from England, Ireland, Scotland and United States discussed their common problems, spoke the same Socialist language, adhered to the same principles. Before leaving for the Workers' Open Forum meeting, they stood around a table, firmly grasped hands in a symbol of international solidarity, and expressed the hope for the speedy realization of an international Socialist conference.

Climaxing the trip (only a few hours before plane time) was a meeting at the Workers' Open Forum, Glasgow, addressed by the two comrades. The hall was jam-packed by more than 450 workers who, except for some heated opposition in question and discussion by a small group of Communists and Anti-Parliamentarians, enthusiastically received and loudly applauded the Socialist case.

After the meeting the comrades were surrounded by well-wishers, and more than a hundred lined the side-walk to cheer them on their way. En route to the airport, a fifteen-minute stop was made at a comrade's home, where a goodly group of Glasgow members, who had been present at the meeting, expressed great enthusiasm, sang comradely songs, and further cheered the comrades on their way. Awaiting them at the airport, 30 miles away, was another group of Glasgow comrades who stayed with them for a grand confabulation until enplaning time, almost 3 a.m.

In a letter recently received from a comrade at Burnley, Lancashire, the following estimate of the trip is expressed:

"That your visit to England and Scotland aroused tremendous interest is beyond doubt. In London and Manchester (and over the phone to Glasgow) we learned from many comrades something of the great enthusiasm which is but one of the results of your tireless endeavours to visit as many branches and meetings as was possible during your all too brief stay. . . . Our Comrades in America will feel tremendously encouraged when they realise the full import of your visit to Britain. I feel sure that I am merely expressing what hundreds here are already thinking and saying, that your momentous visit *must* and *will* be the forerunner of many more involving many comrades. And equally important, it must be two way traffic, and who knows?—maybe it won't be very long before delegates from all the Companion Parties will be converging on some city in Europe or America for the first Socialist International Conference."

G.

CENTENARY SPECIAL ISSUE

Copies of our 50th Anniversary Number may be obtained from Branches or Head Office.

Read about the formation of the S.P.G.B. and the work of the Party in the 50 years 1904—1954. Articles on the Russian Revolution, the Sterility of Labourism, and the Contribution of the S.P.G.B. to the Socialist Movement.

32 pages 4d. (Post free 5½d.)

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," December, 1904)

Socialist Unity

One of the most important questions raised at the International Socialist Congress at Amsterdam was that of Socialist Unity. This is by no means the first time that consideration has been given to this subject. It has often been felt by many of those who have taken part in Socialist propaganda and Socialist organisation that much harm was done by the existence in this and other countries of rival Socialist organisations. And those who have thus felt have been anxious to find some means of unifying the Socialist parties in each country. The International Congress has on the present occasion contented itself with passing a pious resolution recommending the various groups in any country to use their best endeavours to secure this end.

We confess that we are not sanguine that anything will be done. And we are by no means certain that if anything could be done that such thing would be desirable. We are all for unity. We believe that unity of party organisation based upon unity of purpose, unity of principle, and unity of method, is the one thing desirable. But today we are only too sure that such unity of party organisation, so far as the various groups of Socialists in any country are concerned, would be at the expense of unity of purpose, principle and method.

In the field of Socialist thought and Socialist action there are today two distinct tendencies to be found: the revolutionary and the revisionist. At one time the main trend of Socialist development was essentially revolutionary, but today the Socialist movement has been overtaken by a wave of revisionism.

There are in England—in addition to The Socialist

Party of Great Britain—three organisations closely identified with Socialism, viz., the Fabian Society, the Social Democratic Federation, and the Independent Labour Party. Of these four organisations the three latter are revisionists, the former is revolutionary. Hence while there exists no apparent reason—except the jealousy of the individual members—why the three revisionist bodies should not unite, the Socialist Party, taking its stand on the class struggle, which the Fabian Society and the Independent Labour Party in their writings, and the Social-Democratic Federation by their actions deny, is fundamentally opposed to these other parties.

Unity is an important factor in the growth of a party, but it is not the most important. Better far to have a party, however small, with common principles and a common end, than a party, however large, which is bound by no tie save party interest. We, therefore, who differ from these other parties in essential principles—inasmuch as we accept the principle of the class struggle while they do not—cannot consent to unite our forces with theirs. It would weaken both parties—and the weakening would be more disastrous to the uncompromising section than to the revisionist.

We cannot see, therefore, how we can secure unity by joining hands with these organisations. They are carrying out a policy with which we cannot agree, and we, and with us the Socialist movement of this country, of which we claim to be the truest representatives, would be hardened for a space. We are all for unity, but it is for a unity firmly established on a common aim, and a common method. Any other unity is but a delusion.

REFLECTIONS ON THE DOCK STRIKE

WITH Capitalism the class war is never calm for very long. We started this year with an article on the Railway Workers strike and here we are at the end of it reflecting on yet another outbreak of industrial strife.

Now that things have quietened down a bit and Dockland is back at work, let us soberly take a look at a few of the facts which present themselves.

We are always being told by politicians and Press that the Capitalist class are the "Captains of Industry," or "The backbone of the Nation," without whom none of us could survive for long.

A strike such as the October dock strike shows in no uncertain way who the useful people of society really are. When Lord Do-nothing and Lady Do-less, our employers, are yachting on the Mediterranean or roughing it in Monte Carlo their absence goes unnoticed but when the dock-workers walk out on strike, chaos reigns.

Of course "now" is never the time to strike according to the Capitalist Press and they can always find plenty of excuses why pay claims are unfair or a strike to improve conditions is "crazy." However, they always

remain silent on the embarrassing question that if the working class who produce ALL the wealth are not entitled to it, how is the Capitalist Class which produces NOTHING, entitled to any?

One fact is obvious, the strike is the only real weapon the workers have on the industrial field, and while they remain a class of wage slaves the right to withhold the sale of their labour power when the conditions for its sale are repressive must remain.

Compulsory overtime is a repressive condition.

The persuasive powers of the Capitalist Press will always try to divide the rest of the workers against the strikers; this is an old game, but there are signs of workers getting wise to it. The strength of the workers when on strike lies in their solidarity and, looking to the time when they really wake up and organise politically with us for Socialism, a solid, world-wide, Socialist working class would hold every trump in the pack.

According to *The Observer* for 31st October, 1954, "Some £6 to £7 million worth of imports and £5 to £6 million of exports were held up daily."

This paper also tells us that industries ranging from

toy making to motor cars and from dairy produce to rubber manufactures, in places as far flung as Australia, New Zealand and Malaya, have been hit. Although some workers are said to have had "overtime cuts," in general the pain comes from the loss of profits and the dread that the employers may "never regain the business loss."

It is interesting to note that the troops were not used during this strike, due to the peculiar way the strike developed and it looked as though the dockers were going to return a week before they actually did. All the necessary preparations were made, orders had been sent out to various military headquarters but to avoid jeopardizing the chances of a settlement, the orders were not proceeded with.

No Government hesitates for long to use the armed forces. Tory, Liberal and Labour Governments have done so in the past. Any party running Capitalism has in the name of Capital to keep the system going. In this connection we might cast our minds back to the methods used to smash the strike in East Berlin; we then witnessed the spectacle of the *Daily Worker* upholding the brutality while the rest of the British Capitalist Press (for their own reasons) showed "sympathy" for the strikers. We find them all out in the end.

PARLIAMENT AND POWER

RECENTLY the I.L.P. published a pamphlet "The Way To Workers' Control," which is a reprint of chapter 6, section II., of the book "Workers' Councils" by Anton Pannekoek. In an introduction the I.L.P. states:—"This pamphlet is necessary as an antidote for those who have stressed the importance of the Parliamentary struggle. It is important to remind M.P.s who believe that their power rests on a mathematical majority of seats that real power exists outside Parliament (and the courts, as Sir Hartley Shawcross found when he tried to prosecute the dockers in February, 1951)." They also state:—"We believe that the tasks of a political party today do not preclude Parliamentary action. It is our view and, we believe, that of the author, that Socialist policy should not be determined by Parliamentary expediency . . ."

There is also a new journal, "Revolt," published by so-called Marxist Groups, which is putting forward old ideas which have helped to mislead the working class in the past.

We therefore once again have to refute the idea that Socialism can be established before the understanding and acceptance of it by the majority of the workers. Despite all the defeats, hardship and bloodshed experienced by workers in trying to oppose the powers of the State machine by force, these so-called Marxist Groups are once again advocating methods which, if put in effect, could only lead to further defeats. Despite all the experience they have to draw upon, they appear to have learned nothing from the errors of the Anarchists and Communist Parties.

The S.P.G.B. has since its foundation stressed the need for the working class to organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government in order that the machinery of government, including the armed forces, may be converted from an instrument of

The Socialist Party of Great Britain has no hidden "motives," our tongue is not in our cheek; any improvements or gains the workers can obtain under Capitalism they, as the sole producers, are more than entitled to.

However, in conclusion, let us make it clear where we stand. We maintain that the strikes and lockouts, the wars and hardships of Capitalism arise, directly out of the fact that the means of living are owned by the few, the many are therefore a propertyless-class who must work for wages in order to live. The antagonism between employers and workers will know no end while the wealth of the one is derived from the exploitation of the other.

THE VERY EXISTENCE OF WAGES AT ALL shows the economic enslavement of the working class to be a fact.

All the dairy produce of New Zealand, the car factories of Australia, the rubber plantations of Malaya, together with the rest of the land, mills, mines, factories and means of transport constitute what belongs to the Capitalist class and through our work keeps them wealthy and us poor. Only when these things are held in common by all mankind, when the wages system is abolished and things produced solely for use instead of profit, will the need to strike be gone for ever.

H. B.

oppression into the agent of emancipation. The importance of Parliament as the centre of power is dealt with in our pamphlet "Questions of the Day."

What does the I.L.P. mean by the statement "That Socialist policy should not be determined by Parliamentary expediency?" Gaining control of Parliament to introduce Socialism is not Parliamentary expediency. When we of the S.P.G.B. have contested an election we have always put the Socialist case. We have always requested the working class not to vote for the Socialist candidate unless they understand and accepted Socialism. It is the I.L.P. whose election campaigns are determined by Parliamentary expediency, it is the I.L.P. which fails to put the Socialist case to the electors, it is the I.L.P. which puts forward what they believe to be vote catching reforms only to find that the majority of the workers believe that the Labour Party is more likely to obtain these reforms. The I.L.P. is wrong in stating that real power exists outside Parliament.

Power and the Law

Clearly the strongest power in the State, wherever it resides, cannot be limited by law or anything else, since otherwise it would not be the strongest. Parliamentary sovereignty in Britain means that the validity of an Act of Parliament cannot be called in question in any court of law. There is no legal limit to the power of Parliament in Great Britain and consequently no court of law can ever declare, as can an American court with an Act of Congress, that an Act of Parliament is unconstitutional and therefore cannot be enforced.

Sir H. Shawcross, as the Attorney General in the last Labour Government, did not fail in his attempt to prosecute the dockers, because the power of the courts was greater than that of Parliament but because he was in too much of a hurry. The Labour Government could have

changed the law, it had a majority in the House of Commons, but it was bound by previous laws which it had not changed. The Labour Government knew that if they did change the law it would have to bear the consequences in the next general election.

E. S. Heffler, writing in issue No. 2 of the paper *Revolt*, states: "The lessons of the 1926 General Strike must be learned. During that revolutionary upsurge, the workers created their own embryonic State organs, when the Trades Councils were in varying degrees transformed into Councils of Action. Parliament, as such, was powerless, and it was only the reformist spinelessness of the leadership of the T.U.C. and the Labour Party that led to defeat."

This is nonsense. Parliament was not powerless, it still controlled the posse, it controlled the armed forces and, as many workers found, was prepared to use all the powers of the State to defeat the General Strike. Talk of defeat because of the leaders of the T.U.C. and the Labour Party, is an old, old story. Who elected these leaders? Who supported them after the defeat? The fact that the working class had the need of leaders showed that they did not know what to do but were prepared to follow leaders. It is, too, an odd explanation to give that the all-powerful upsurge of the workers was too weak to overcome a handful of leaders.

Up to the present the mass of the workers have lacked political knowledge and have voted for people instead of principles. The members of the so-called Marxist Group and people with similar ideas on "revolutionary action" have never grown up, they are like children playing at revolution and no doubt enjoying themselves for a time, then, when things go wrong they blame the leaders.

With regard to Parliamentary action Marx and Engels had no doubt about the position as the two following

quotations show.

"The working classes will have learned by experience that no lasting benefit whatever can be obtained for them by others but that they must obtain it themselves by conquering, first of all, political power. They must see now that under no circumstances have they any guarantee for bettering their social position unless by universal suffrage which would enable them to send a majority of working men in the House of Commons ('The Ten Hours Question' by F. Engels)."

"But universal suffrage is the equivalent for political power for the working class of England, where the proletariat form the large majority of the population, where, in a long, though underground, civil war, it has gained a clear consciousness of its position as a class, and where even the rural districts know no longer any peasants, but landlords, industrial Capitalists (farmers) and hired labourers. The carrying of universal suffrage in England would, therefore, be a far more Socialist measure than anything which has been honoured with that name on the Continent."

"Its inevitable result here is the political supremacy of the working class."

From an article by K. Marx on the Chartists, *New York Tribune*, August 25th, 1852, Marx was too optimistic as to how the workers would use their votes. Unfortunately the workers had not a clear consciousness of their position as a class. They still have not. But at least Marx and Engels recognised the necessity of capturing the political machinery and the necessity of gaining a majority in the House of Commons. This is something the members of the so-called Marxists Groups have yet to learn. No doubt they recognise that the majority of the workers would not elect their candidates if they contested an election. But the answer is not to belittle the powers of Parliament but to propagate Socialism. This is the method of the S.P.G.B. We know that once the majority understand and accept Socialism the powers of government will soon be conquered by the working class.

D. W. L.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN INDONESIA

Fifth Party Congress

The Communists have always claimed to be the heirs of Marxism; the real "revolutionaries." Socialists have denied their claims. We have always said that the Stalinists are neither Socialists nor Internationalists; that they do not stand for the abolition of Capitalist society.

A recent Congress (the fifth) of the Indonesian Communist Party supports our viewpoint.

In the Cominform paper *For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy* (October 15, 1954), D. N. Aidit, General Secretary of the C.P.I., reports on some of the more important aspects of the Congress.

Private Property and the Peasants

After admitting that the basic reason for the failure of the "People's Revolution" of 1945-48, was due to the fact that the peasants had not supported it, Aidit claimed that the peasants now were rising against the landlords in South and Central Sumatra; and that elsewhere the agrarian programme of the Communist Party, adopted at the Congress, had aroused the peasants throughout Indonesia.

What, then, is this "revolutionary" programme? The common ownership of the land? No. The policy of the Indonesian Communists is to "isolate the peasant masses from the feudal landlords," to end feudal land

ownership, and "to give the landlords' land free of charge to the peasants as their own private property."

The Congress decided to replace the slogans "Nationalization of the Land" and "All Land to become State property," with "Distribution of the Land to the Peasants," and "Individual Ownership for the Peasants." The reason for the change of slogans is explained away by the admission that: "The principle of private ownership of the land in our country is so deeply rooted in the lives of the peasants that they cannot understand an agrarian revolution in any other form other than the land of the landlords should be distributed as their own private property." (D. N. Aidit). In other words instead of advocating the common ownership of the means of living—Socialism—the Communists advocate the continuation of private property relationship in a different form—just because the peasants want it!

United Front with the Capitalists

Although the Indonesian Communist Party has now set itself the task of strengthening the "alliance" between the workers and peasants, this does not mean that they intend to ignore "intelligentsia," small and large capitalists.

The Congress agreed that the key to the victory (of the Communist Party) lay in the creation of a "National

United Front" of workers, peasants, intelligentsia, small capitalists against the feudal landowners and the "Imperialists." "Their land," said Mr. Aidit, "must be confiscated and nationalized."

In attempting to unite workers, peasants and local capitalists against the landowners and foreign capitalists, the Communists have as their object the creation and building-up of a national capitalist state, sympathetic to

Soviet Russia, and under the leadership of the Communist Party. Their aim is the exploitation of the Indonesian masses by local capitalists instead of foreign ones.

As in Ceylon, Indo-China and other Asiatic countries, the Indonesian Communists represent not the interests of the workers but those of both the Russian and the local native ruling class.

PETER E. NEWELL.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

The Autumn Delegate Meeting, held this year at Denison House, was, if uneventful, quite successful although the delegation was not as well attended as usual. The only Provincial Branches present were Manchester and Swansea.

The Social held on the Saturday at Head Office after the first day's business was over, was a very happy one, the decorations were particularly attractive, mainly the work of members of South West London Branch.

"The Socialist Standard" sales are not as we would wish, despite the fact that members in several branches, Ealing and West Ham in particular, are making great efforts in their own districts. The subscription form in this issue is a reminder that members and sympathisers can ensure a regular copy of the STANDARD each month and the Literature Committee, would be happy to cope with the additional work of a record number of subscriptions! If each reader can get an additional subscriber, it would be a good start for increased sales in the New Year.

Glasgow (City and Kelvingrove Branches) are continuing with success, their weekly indoor lectures, but 19th December is a special occasion, when they are arranging

a debate with a representative from the Scottish National Congress. There will not be a meeting on January 1st as it is anticipated that the attendance would be poor owing to the fact that it is a Scottish holiday.

Treetops (Surrey) was the venue for another happy and successful week-end for a small group of Party Members. Several discussions and arguments took place between members and those of the International Friendship League—who claimed to be "non-political." Members had excellent opportunities of putting forward the Party's case to a gathering which represented 18 nations, including some from Yugo-Slavia who thought they had Socialism "a la Tito." More propaganda among such people should be done.

South-West London Branch would like to draw the attention of members to the series of Sunday evening lectures being held at Head Office throughout the winter months. Several interesting topics will be dealt with and it is hoped that more members will bring along their friends to these lectures and so get them interested in the Socialist case.

P. H.

DOWN YOUR WAY

What's happening down your way? What are you talking about in the office? Football Pools? T.V.? The cost of living? Marilyn Monroe? Probably. Workers are apathetic about most social questions; and the political parties are finding it increasingly difficult to attract audiences to their meetings.

But are the workers really satisfied with present-day conditions? Are you satisfied? Surely not. You're fed-up with hydrogen bombs, the talk of war, the cost of living, the Labour Party—and the Tories. They both promised to solve your housing problems, rising prices. They promised you peace—whilst preparing for war. Is it surprising that you are cynical and apathetic? That you are fed-up with "politics?" Most people think there can be no solution to all these evils that beset us; and that the present order—or "disorder" of society will always be with us.

Yes, you are quite right. "Politics," that is the politics of running this present system, is a "dirty game." And we, as Socialists, are not interested in playing the game. We know that the various political parties that

promise to solve your problems for you are incapable of doing so. We know that the present system of society—capitalism—cannot be run in your interest. That is why we propose that you change it. That is why we want to get you interested, not so much in "politics," but in society as it is; and in society as it could be, as it must be, in the future. We want you to desire and work for an entirely new way of life.

In the world today the means of producing the things we need and desire do not belong to society as a whole: they are owned by quite a small section of the community—the capitalist class. Most of us own none of these things. All that we as workers possess is our ability to work. And our employers only employ us in order that they make a profit. After all, that is why they are in business. Such is the nature of capitalism. Now, without going into a great deal of detail at the moment, we can say that it is this state of affairs—the private ownership of the means of living and production for profit—that is the basic cause of most of present-day problems. That is why we want you to get interested in our ideas; why we want you to cease being cynical and apathetic.

Instead of putting your trust in politicians and leaders—until you get fed-up with them!—we suggest you do a little thinking for yourselves.

We Socialists are ordinary people. We have studied our society and have come to the conclusion that whilst the present profit-making system remains we will never get rid of the evils of war, insecurity and the rest. We think that only by changing the whole structure of society will we get rid of these problems. Only by making the means of life—the factories, offices, railways, etc.—the common possession of all people, and producing the things necessary to satisfy people's needs and desires solely for use and not for profit will we eradicate these evils.

This, briefly, is our alternative to "politics," football pools, the "dogs"—and apathy.

Think it over.

PETER E. NEWELL.

SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

at

52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET

(Clapham North or Clapham Common Tube Stns.)

A series of regular Sunday evening lectures will be held at Head Office throughout the winter. Commencing each Sunday at 8 p.m.

5th Dec. "Food and Money" — R. AMBRIDGE.

12th "A Socialist in his Trade Union" — W. WATERS

19th "What is a fair day's wage?" — TROTMAN.

2nd Jan. "The Colour Problem" — S. CASH.

LECTURES AT DENISON HOUSE

296, VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD, S.W.1.

Sunday Evenings, commencing at 7 p.m.

5th Dec. "EDUCATION AND SOCIETY." — R. COSTER.

12th "THE ILLUSION OF PEACE" — W. KERR.

19th "DOES RUSSIA WANT PEACE?" — L. BRYAN.

HACKNEY LECTURE

at

CO-OP HALL, 197, MARE STREET, HACKNEY

on

Monday, 6th December at 8 p.m.

"SOCIALISM AND PLENTY" — J. D'ARCY.

DEBATE WITH SCOTTISH NATIONAL CONGRESS

in

Room 6, CENTRAL HALLS, BATH STREET, GLASGOW

on

on 19th December at 7.30 p.m.

Subject: "WHICH SHOULD THE WORKERS SUPPORT — THE S.P.G.B. OR THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL CONGRESS?"

Speakers: For S.P.G.B.—A. SHAW.

For S.N.C.—R. B. WILKIE (M.A.).

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Detach and forward, with remittance, to Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Please send SOCIALIST STANDARD for 12 months (6 months, 2/9) for which 5/6 is enclosed.

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DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP.—Meets Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. at Woodworker's Hall, Coupars Alley, Wellgate. Correspondence to P. G. Cavanagh, 1b, Benzie Road, Dundee.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wednesdays 8th and 22nd December, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

ROMFORD.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Friday each month at Church House, Wykeham Hall, Romford (8.0 p.m.) Correspondence to: C. C. Green, 12, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster.

RUGBY.—Group meets alternate Mondays 6th and 20th December, at 7, Paradise Street. Correspondence: Sec. c/o above address.

WATFORD.—Group meets alternate Thursdays 2nd, 16th and 30th December at 8 p.m., at T.U. Hall, Woodford Road, (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

GLASGOW MEETINGS

(City and Kelvingrove Branches)

at

CENTRAL HALLS, BATH STREET

Sundays at 7.30 p.m.

(Doors open at 7 p.m.)

12th Dec. "A" BOMB POLITICS"—D. WEBSTER.

26th " "THE COLD WAR"—R. REID.

8th Jan. "SOCIALISM"—R. RUSSELL.

PADDINGTON DISCUSSIONS

PORTMAN ARMS, 422, EDGWARE ROAD, W.2
Every Wednesday

8th Dec. "Emergence of Socialism"

Speaker: S. CASH.

15th Dec. "SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF INDUSTRY"

Speaker: E. ROWAN.

22nd Dec. "HORROR COMICS, Etc."

Speaker: R. COSTER.

All Meetings commence punctually at 8 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Mondays: Finsbury Square.
Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.
Thursdays: Tower Hill.
Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

SPEAKERS FOR TRADE UNION BRANCHES.

Trade Union branches wishing to hear the Socialist Case are invited to apply to the Propaganda Committee at the Head Office or to a local branch.

BOREHAM WOOD

Will members and sympathisers willing to cooperate in forming a group at Boreham Wood contact:

I. WEBB, 52, Goldbeater Grove,
Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley, Birmingham.

BLOOMSBURY. Correspondence to Secretary. c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m., 2nd and 16th December.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26, Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

BRIGHTON. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. I. Groves, 92, St. Georges Way, Peckham, S.E.15.

CROYDON meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: H. J. Wilson, 7, Cyril Road, Bexleyheath, Kent. Tel.: Bexleyheath 1950.

EALING meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCLES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6., (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.). Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to J. Keys, 6, Keppele House, Lucan Place, Chelsea, S.W.3.

GLASGOW (City) meets Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m., Workers Open Forum, Halls, Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 13th and 27th December, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Farmer, 46, Fernie Street, Glasgow, N.W.

HACKNEY meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at the Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8. Letters to Maurice Shea, 31, Goldsmiths Row, Shoreditch, E.2.

HAMPSTEAD meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Road Met. Stn.). Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware, Middlesex.

HIGH WYCOMBE Branch meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191, Bowerdean Road.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. L. H. Courtney, 53, Canonbury Park South, Islington, N.1.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

LEYTON Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

MANCHESTER Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 14th and 28th December, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m., "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2. (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall). Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

PALMERS GREEN Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

ST. PANCRAS meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. LONDON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o Head Office.

SOUTHEND meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

SWANSEA Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays in month, 7.9.30 p.m., at Khavayam, Mansel Drive, Murton, Bishopston. Discussion after Branch business. Visitors welcomed. D. Jacobs, Secretary.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18, Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., St. Edmunds Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m. Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.